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& Miss Crampton — Glenbrook - Emmi
from the Editor

A MEMOIR

OF

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

A MEMOIR

OF

MARIA EDGEWORTH,

WITH

A SELECTION FROM HER LETTERS

BY THE LATE

MRS. EDGEWORTH.

EDITED BY HER CHILDREN.

Not Published.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY JOSEPH MASTERS AND SON,
ALDERSGATE STREET AND NEW BOND STREET.
1867.

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MARIA EDGEWORTH.

The first time I ever saw Maria Edgeworth was in the year 1797, when I paid a visit at Foxhall with my father and mother to Mrs. Fox, Maria's aunt, little foreseeing then that we were to be so nearly connected, and that ours was to be the most intimate friendship for life—a friendship unbroken by a single cloud of difference or mistrust for fifty-one years. She had such a perfectly honest mind, such an open, candid disposition, that whatever was the subject of her conversation, or whatever were the transactions in which one might be engaged with her, one felt as if the mind was enlarged, and the value of truth and the courage of decision increased in her presence.

Maria was the second child and eldest daughter of Richard Lovell Edgeworth and Anna Maria, daughter of Paul Elers, Esq., of Black Bourton, in Oxfordshire, where she was born, January 1, 1767, and where she spent her first years: here the vivacity of her early wit was encouraged, and the sallies of her temper were unrepressed by her soft-hearted mother and tender aunts. She scarcely recollected being at Lichfield, when her father and mother resided there, but she well remembered the death of her mother, and being taken into the room to receive her last kiss, at the house of her great aunt, Miss Blake, who lived with two sisters in

Great Russell Street. She remembered the fine figures of these stately old ladies, and being taken by them to play in the gardens at the back of the British Museum.

On Mr. Edgeworth's marriage with Honora Sneyd, Maria accompanied them to Ireland. Of this visit she recollected very little, except that she was a mischievous child, amusing herself once at her Aunt Fox's when the company were unmindful of her, cutting out the squares in a checked sofa cover, and one day trampling through a number of hot-bed frames that had just been glazed, laid on the grass before the door at Edgeworthstown; she recollected her delight at the crashing of the glass, but, immorally, did not remember either cutting her feet or how she was punished for this performance.

In the year 1775, in consequence of Mrs. Honora Edgeworth's failing health, Maria was placed at school at Derby with Mrs. Lataffiere. Of this excellent woman she always spoke with gratitude and affection. She said that, on the first day of her entrance into the school, she felt more admiration at a child less than herself repeating the nine parts of speech, than she ever felt afterwards for any effort of human genius.

From Mrs. Lataffiere's she dates the following letter, the first extant of her writing:—

"*Derby, March* 30, 1776.

"Dear Mamma,

"It is with the greatest pleasure I write to you, as I flatter myself it will make you happy to hear from me. I hope you and my dear papa are well. School now seems agreeable to me. I have begun French and dancing, and intend to make" ("great" was written, but a line drawn over it) "improvement in everything

I learn. I know that it will give you great satisfaction to hear that I am a good girl. My cousin Clay sends her love to you; mine to my brothers and sisters, who I hope are well. Pray give my duty to papa, and accept the same from, dear mamma,

"Your dutiful Daughter."

The writing-master at this school taught admirably, and from him Maria learned to write the beautiful hand, which never altered to the end of her life.

Among the teachers at Mrs. Lataffiere's was a lady who instructed them in embroidery; an art of which Maria was always fond. She well remembered the patience and kindness with which this poor lady, who was suffering from cancer, and who, as they all knew, was then going away to die, laid out the patterns and the silks for each of them in the exactest order. This domestic heroism made a deep impression, young as she then was, upon her mind.

The natural genius and sensibility of Maria's mind was indeed evident from her early appreciation of genius and sensibility in others: her father and Mrs. Honora Edgeworth were, even in her earliest years, perceived to be far, far above every one else whom she knew. She recollected all her life the minutest advice which Mrs. Honora Edgeworth gave to her. She felt great awe of her at the time, but she was long afterwards sensible of her justice, and of the habits of exactness and order in which she trained her. The surpassing beauty of her presence struck Maria, young as she was, at her first acquaintance with her: she remembered standing by her dressing-table and looking up at her with a sudden feeling of "How beautiful!"

Mrs. Honora Edgeworth to Maria.

"*Beighterton, near Shiffnall,*
"*Oct.* 10, 1779.

"I am obliged to neglect many things which I wish to do because writing is disagreeable and painful to me; and it has really hurt me that I have omitted writing to you, my dear Maria. I promised you that I would, and have had the performance of my promise continually in my mind; but my not being able to write except when I feel myself particularly well has obliged me to defer it from day to day, till I fear you have begun to think that I forget you as soon as you are out of my sight.

"I had written the above before I received your letter, which, as I have left Lichfield, did not reach me till last night. I thank you for it, though I assure you I did not expect it. I am particularly desirous you should be convinced of this, as I *told* you I would write first. It is in vain to attempt to please a person who will not tell us what they *do* and what they do *not* desire; but as I tell you very fully what I think may be expected from a girl of your age, abilities and education, I assure you, my dear Maria, you may entirely depend upon me, that as long as I have the use of my understanding, I shall not be displeased with you for omitting anything which I had before told you I did not expect. Perhaps you may not quite understand what I mean, for I have not expressed myself clearly. If you do not, I will explain myself to you when we meet; for it is very agreeable to me to think of conversing with you as my equal in every respect but age,

and of my making that inequality of use to you by giving you the advantage of the experience I have had, and the observations I have been able to make, as these are parts of knowledge which nothing but time can bestow. I have hardly left room to tell you what you will wish to hear about. I thank you for your inquiries after my health; I cannot say that I feel materially better than when I left you at Derby. I hope however that my cough is abated, and that the air of this place, which is remarkably good, will quite remove it. We left Lichfield a week ago, and are now at Beighterton, pronounced Biterton, a pleasant country place, where we mean to remain all winter if it agree with my health. Your father is in general very well; he received your letter, and would have answered it, but that I begged he would not till I had written first. I dare say you will hear from him soon. Dick[1] has been into port, but only for two or three days; he has been very attentive in writing to your father and me."

R. L. Edgeworth to Maria.

"*April* 6, 1780.

"My dear Maria,

"Your mother desires me to thank you very kindly for the embroidered work-bag you sent her, which gave her more pleasure than anything of that kind ever did. She thinks it is remarkably well done, and she is very glad that you have acquired a taste for that kind of work, as it will be a source of constant innocent feminine amusement. She begs Mrs. Lataffiere

[1] Maria's eldest brother, who had gone into the navy, and was now serving under Lord Longford.

to supply you with materials for a white satin waistcoat to embroider for me, which she begs you to work at your *leisure*. If she ever is able she will wear it herself with a habit, and I shall take more pleasure, my dear daughter, in finery of your making, than I have ever done in any other, at any time of my life. We don't wish you to work anything to put in a frame.

"It would be very agreeable to me, my dear Maria, to have letters from you FAMILIARLY: I wish to know what you like and what you dislike; I wish to communicate to you what little knowledge I have acquired, that you may have a tincture of every species of literature, and form your taste by choice and not by chance.

"Adieu! enjoy the pleasure of increasing the love and esteem of your excellent mother and of your

"Affectionate Father.

"Suppose before you did anything else, that you worked a work-bag for your Aunt Fox?

"Your poor mother continues extremely ill."

Not a month afterwards her father wrote again to her.

"*May* 2, 1780.

"MY DEAR DAUGHTER,

"At six o'clock on Sunday morning your excellent mother expired in my arms. She now lies dead beside me, and I know I am doing what would give her pleasure if she were capable of feeling anything, by writing to you at this time to fix her excellent image in your mind. As you grow older, and become acquainted with more of my friends, you will hear from every

mouth the most exalted character of your incomparable mother. You will be convinced by your own reflections upon her conduct, that she fulfilled the part of a mother towards you, and towards your sisters, without partiality for her own, or servile indulgence towards mine. Her heart, conscious of rectitude, was above the fear of raising suspicions to her disadvantage in the mind of your father, or in the minds of your other relations: and though her timely restraint of you, and that steadiness of behaviour, yielding fondness towards you only by the exact measure of your conduct, at first alarmed those who did not know her, yet now, my dearest daughter, every person who has the least connection with my family is anxious to give sincere testimony of their admiration of those very circumstances which they had too hastily, and from a common and well-grounded opinion, associated with the idea of a second wife.

"Continue, my dear daughter, the desire which you feel of becoming amiable, prudent, and of Use. The ornamental parts of a character with such an understanding as yours, necessarily ensue: but true judgment and sagacity in the choice of friends, and the regulation of your behaviour, can be had only from reflection and from being thoroughly convinced of what experience teaches in general too late, that to be happy we must be good.

"God bless you, and make you ambitious of that valuable praise which the amiable character of your dear mother forces from the virtuous and the wise. My writing to you in my present situation will, my dearest daughter, be remembered by you as the strongest proof of the love of

"Your approving and affectionate Father."

Such a letter, written at such a time, made the impression it was intended to convey, and the wish to act up to the high opinion her father had formed of her character, became the exciting and controlling power over the whole of her future life.

R. L. Edgeworth to Maria.

"*Lichfield, May* 25, 1780.

"DEAR MARIA,

"Your Aunt Ruxton would have been very glad to have seen you if it had been possible; but her time in England is too short to permit it; I therefore beg that you will send the work-bag which you have done for her, to Lichfield as soon as you can. Roll it round a piece of stick, and let it be covered carefully with a bit of oil-case; or put it into a little box.

"I also beg that you will send me a tale, about the length of a 'Spectator,' upon the subject of GENEROSITY; it must be taken from History or Romance, and must be sent the day se'nnight after you receive this, and I beg you will take some pains about it."

The same subject was given at the same time to a young gentleman from Oxford, then at Lichfield. When the two stories were completed they were given to Mr. William Sneyd, Mr. Edgeworth's brother-in-law, to decide on their merits; he pronounced Maria's to be very much the best: "An excellent story, and extremely well written; but where's the Generosity?" a saying which became a sort of proverb with her afterwards. It was Maria's first story; but it has not been preserved; she used to say that there was in it a

sentence of inextricable confusion between a saddle, a man, and his horse.

In 1780 Maria was removed from Mrs. Lataffiere's to the fashionable establishment of Mrs. Davis, in Upper Wimpole Street, in London. Even in the midst of the embarrassment of her introduction to her new mistress, she was struck by the reflected effect on Mrs. Davis's countenance, of her father's air and address when he brought her to the school. Mrs. Davis was well suited to be the head of such an establishment, she took conscientious care of the young ladies; and though Maria was neither beautiful nor fashionable, she treated her with kindness and consideration. Excellent masters were in attendance, and Maria went through all the usual tortures of backboards, iron collars, and dumb-bells, with the unusual one of being swung by the neck to draw out the muscles and increase the growth, a signal failure in her case. She had so little taste for music, that the music-master very honourably advised her to give up learning to play on the piano-forte. He however underrated her powers of ear, for when I knew her she enjoyed good music, and at Mrs. Davis's she learned to dance well, and liked it. She delighted to remember the pleasure she felt in the perfect time in which her companions executed a favourite dance of that day, Slingsby's Allemand. She remembered her sense of gratified admiration at the graceful movements of a circle of the taller girls, hand in hand, raising their arms for the little children to dance under them, and many years afterwards recognised the beautiful air when played for her.

Maria had been well grounded in French and Italian, by Mr. Lataffiere, and when she came to do the exer-

cises set to her class at Mrs. Davis's, she found them so easy that she wrote those given out for the whole quarter, at once, keeping them strung together in her desk, and while the other girls were labouring at their tasks she had all that time for reading what she pleased to herself, and when the French master came round for the exercises had only to unstring hers and present it. Her favourite seat during play time was under a high ebony cabinet which stood at one end of the school-room, and here she often remained so completely absorbed by the book she was reading as to be perfectly deaf to all the noise around her, only occasionally startled into consciousness of it by some unusual uproar. This early habit of concentrated attention, perhaps inherent in minds of great genius, continued through life.

Maria was remembered by her companions both at Mrs. Lataffiere's and at Mrs. Davis's for her entertaining stories, and she learned with all the tact of an improvisatrice to know which tale was most successful by the unmistakable evidence of her auditors wakefulness, when she narrated at night for the amusement of those who were in the bed-room with her. Many of these stories were, of course, taken from the books that she read; among those of her originals she recollected only one which was especially applauded: of an adventurer who had a mask made of the dried skin taken from a dead man's face, which he put on when he wished to be disguised, and kept buried at the foot of a tree.

At school Maria learned to study character. In those little worlds she early acquired her penetration into the motives which sway most actions. There she saw numbers, though on a small scale, and could estimate the effect of the voice of the multitude, and the ease with

which that multitude can be governed by any one who chooses to take the lead.

In 1781, soon after her father's marriage with Miss Elizabeth Sneyd, Maria's eyes became painfully inflamed; she was taken to one of the first physicians of the day in London, who putting her between his knees, examined her eyes, and pronounced with equal brutality and ignorance, "She will lose her sight."

Her father gave her every consolation that sympathy and affection could afford. All that medical skill could do was tried. Mrs. Davis was kind and attentive, and all Maria's friends endeavoured to alleviate her sufferings.

Mrs. Elizabeth Edgeworth to Maria.

"*Sept.* 23, 1781.

"I thank you, my dear Maria, for your kind letter. I hoped from your account of yourself that your eyes were perfectly well, and am very sorry to find from Mrs. Davis's last letter that your eye has lately been more painful to you; the patience with which you bear it, and good disposition you show in every respect she much commends; and the pleasure such accounts give to your father and myself will, I hope, be some comfort to you, my dear. I hope this will find you at Mr. Day's."

At Mr. Day's house at Anningsly, Maria spent some of her holidays. A stronger contrast could hardly be imagined than that between a fashionable school in London where accomplishments were the object of existence, and where it was "a sacred duty to be fine," and Mr. Day's austere simplicity of life. Nothing could, however, exceed the care and kindness which he and

Mrs. Day showed to the daughter of their friend. The lofty nature of his mind, his romantic character, his metaphysical inquiries, and eloquent discussions, took her into another world. The icy strength of his system came at the right moment for annealing her principles. His mixture of speculative misanthropy, and real benevolence appeared in all his conduct. Bishop Berkeley's tar-water was still considered as a specific for all complaints; Mr. Day thought it would be of use to Maria's inflamed eyes, and he used to bring a large tumbler full of it to her every morning. She dreaded his, "Now Miss Maria, drink this;" but there was, in spite of his stern voice, something of pity, and sympathy in his countenance which always induced her to swallow it. His excellent library was open to her and he directed her studies. His severe reasoning and uncompromising truth of mind awakened all her powers, and the questions he put to her, and the working out of the answers, the necessity of perfect accuracy in all her words, suited the natural truth of her mind, and though such strictness was not always agreeable, she even then perceived its advantage, and in after life was grateful for it. Her eyes, whether from the tar-water or change of air, by degrees recovered from the inflammation, and her health improved; but it was always very delicate—she suffered from overwhelming headaches and was never equal to much bodily exertion.

In 1782 Maria was taken from school and went with her father, Mrs. Elizabeth Edgeworth, and her young brother and sisters, to Edgeworthstown, which was her home for the rest of her life. She had been once before staying there when very young, but she was now old enough to be struck with the differences, then so strik-

ing, between Ireland and England; the tones and looks, the melancholy and gaiety of the people, were so new and extraordinary to her, that the delineations she long afterwards made of Irish character probably owe their life and truth to the impression made on her arrival at this time as a stranger. Though it was in June when they arrived there was snow on the roses she ran out to gather, and she felt altogether in a new and extraordinary country.

In the autumn of this year Maria began, at her father's suggestion, to translate Madame de Genlis' Adèle et Théodore. Her father writes to her from Dublin in December, with corrections of her MS.—her first work intended for publication and his first corrections. She had completed one volume, when Holcroft's translation appeared. Neither her father nor she, however, regretted the time she had spent on this work; it formed her handwriting, and gave her a readiness and choice of words which only translation teaches.

She was at this time very reserved in manner, and little inclined to converse. To those who knew her in after years with all her brilliant wit, in the company of the first-rate talkers of French and English society, and her never-failing cheerfulness, and flow of conversation at home, this unwillingness to speak appears incredible. She was, however, then in weak health, and felt great powers which were unvalued by the young and gay of ordinary society. She knew that her father appreciated these powers, and she was contented with his approbation. She had been taken notice of by his friend, Lady Holt, while in England, and thus early learned to admire high-bred manners, and high principle joined with knowledge of the world. She was now treated with great kindness by a lady who

combined all these qualities with uncommon abilities—old Lady Moira, whom she had frequent opportunities of meeting at Castle Forbes, the residence of her daughter, Lady Granard. Lady Moira was at this time a personage of great influence in Ireland; she held a sort of court at Moira House in Dublin, the resort of all the wise and witty of the day—the notice that she took of a timid unobtrusive very young girl was therefore gratifying. She talked to Maria as one who could understand her, and her profound remarks, and her anecdotes of her own experience of life were listened to with the most eager attention and admiration. As Lady Huntingdon's daughter, Lady Moira had seen a strange sort of society and been acquainted with persons of great powers strangely employed—a new world to Maria. At Pakenham Hall she became acquainted with Mrs. Greville, the mother of Lady Crew, and many people of distinction in the literary or political world. Lord Longford himself, one of her father's dearest friends, was a man of unusual ability, with a frankness and charm of manner which were most winning. Lady Longford, with her romantic enthusiastic mind, the mother of heroes, and Admiral Pakenham, with his inexhaustible wit and generous friendship, who, in his careless dress and jovial manner still looked and was every inch a gentleman; were all, not merely figures moving before Maria as in the raree show of London society, but understood in the intimacy of domestic life, so that though her girlhood passed without ever being in what is called the world, her ideas were gradually expanding, and her insight into character constantly increasing.

Her father employed her as an agent and accountant;

an employment in which she showed marvellous acuteness and patience; it not only gave her habits of business and accuracy, but let her into a familiarity with the modes of thought and terms of expression among the people which she could in no other way have acquired. The exactness of arithmetical calculations far from disgusting her by its dryness, was agreeable to the honesty of her mind, and the apparently monotonous business of adding up columns of accounts was a pleasure to her, so much did she like to make her totals agree and complete her admirably-kept account books.

Her father and Mrs. Edgeworth allowed her to have the care of her little brother Henry, and how fondly she was attached to him—he was at this time four years old—appears by the following letter:—

Maria to Miss Charlotte Sneyd.

"*Edgeworthstown, Dec.* 9, 1787.

"I think, my dear Aunt Charlotte, I did not know till Henry returned to us after his six weeks' absence, how very agreeable even a child of his age can make himself, but I am sure that his journey has been productive of so much pleasure to me from the kindness and approbation you have shown, and has left on my mind so full a conviction of your skill in the art of education, that I should part with Henry again to-morrow with infinitely more security and satisfaction than I did two months ago. I was really surprised to see with what ease and alacrity little Henry returned to all his former habits and occupations, and the very slight change that appeared in his manner or mind; nothing seemed strange to him in anything, or anybody about

him. When he spoke of you to us he seemed to think that we were all necessarily connected in all our commands and wishes, that we were all one *whole*—one great polypus soul. I hope my father will tell you himself how much he liked your letter, 'the overflowings of a full mind, not the froth of an empty one.'"

One of Maria's greatest pleasures was to ride out with her father; constitutionally timid and never a good horsewoman, she did not enjoy riding with any one else, but she had such complete faith in her father's perfect command of his horse that she felt when with him, quite at ease on hers; he always declared he could think, invent, and compose better on horseback than anywhere else. In these rides her attention was so much taken up with his conversation that she forgot to be frightened.

In 1789 the sudden death of Mr. Day deprived Maria and her father of a friend, whose affection they so highly valued, and to whose judgment and resolution they looked in every difficulty. The chasm left by the loss of her father's earliest friend was never filled up; the death of Mr. Day formed a painful era in Mr. Edgeworth's life and in Maria's; the prodigious influence he possessed over both their minds, and the large space he occupied in all their thoughts and views, was never supplied by any after friendship; there could be no second Mr. Day.

This great misfortune was followed by the death of Honora, the only daughter of Mrs. Honora Edgeworth; she was not more than fifteen years of age, but her extraordinary beauty, her early genius, and the exalted character with which she impressed all who knew her, seemed to belong to years and experience she was never

to reach. Mrs. Ruxton told me that her beauty was quite dazzling; she had taken her to Dublin to consult physicians, and at the inn where they stopped on the journey, a waiter stood incapable of hearing Mrs. Ruxton's directions, gazing transfixed on the beautiful Honora. The physicians could do nothing for her, she was not to remain in this world. After her return to Edgeworthstown, Mrs. Ruxton was obliged to go home, and Honora lingered for some time; she died in February, 1790.

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Feb.* 11, 1790.

"Your friendship, my dear Aunt Ruxton, has, I am sure, considerably alleviated the anguish of mind my father has had to feel, and your letter and well-deserved praise of my dear mother's fortitude and exertion were a real pleasure to her. She has indeed had a great deal to bear, and I think her health has suffered, but I hope not materially. In my father's absence, she ordered everything, did everything, felt everything herself. Unless, my dear aunt, you had been present during the last week of dear Honora's sufferings, I think you could not form an idea of anything so terrible or so touching. Such extreme fortitude, such affection, such attention to the smallest feelings of others, as she showed on her death-bed!

"My father has carefully kept his mind occupied ever since his return, but we cannot help seeing his feelings at intervals. He has not slept for two or three nights, and is, I think, far from well to-day. The lands of Mr. Fetherston, between £200 and £300 a year, which have just fallen into his hands, keep him pretty well

occupied at present in the settling of them, and he says he permits avarice to take possession of his mind; but you will not think it a passion particularly suited to him at any time.

"He said the other day, speaking of Honora, 'My dear daughters, I promise you one thing, I never will reproach any of you with Honora. I will never reproach you with any of her virtues.' There could not be a kinder or more generous promise, but I could not help fearing that my father should refrain from speaking of her too much, and that it would hurt his mind. He used to say it was a great relief to him to talk of my mother Honora.

"I had intended, my dear aunt, to write to you some account of the last days of my dear sister's illness, and whilst every word she said is fresh in our memory, but I considered afterwards that if you should wish to hear such particulars, we should be better able some time hence, to *tell* than to write them to you."

This is the first letter extant of a series which continued for forty-two years. To write to Aunt Ruxton was, as long as she lived, Maria's greatest pleasure while away from her, and to be with her was a happiness she enjoyed with never-flagging and supreme delight. Black Castle was within a few hours' drive of Edgeworthstown, and to "go to Black Castle" was the holiday of her life.

Mrs. Ruxton resembled her brother in person, and in the wit and vivacity of her mind and strong affections. Her grace and charm of manner were such that a gentleman once said of her, "If I were to see Mrs. Ruxton sitting in rags as a beggar on the doorstep, I should say 'Madam' to her!"

Mr. Ruxton, under a grave and reserved manner, had a warm heart and a keen relish for humour, and delighted in Maria's company. Several of Mr. and Mrs. Ruxton's children died young, but the Richard, Sophy, and Margaret mentioned in these letters lived as Maria's intimate friends for the greater part of her life.

R. L. Edgeworth to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown,* 1791.

"My dear Sister,

"After a pleasant journey I returned from one very pleasant family to another. Happy the man who can thus vary his pleasures, and cut off the regret that attends all sublunary pleasures. By-the-bye, why sublunary? Can no happiness be had except we climb 'high as the moon and higher?' Or does the moon create tides in happiness and misery as it does in the ocean?"

Continued by Maria.

"The best news that I have to tell you is, that the mathematical instruments, globes, &c., which Mr. Day gave to my father, are come over safe, and a cargo of books from England. Would that you could be by at the unpacking of them!"

Far from book societies and circulating libraries, the arrival of a box of books from London was an event which interested the whole family; and Maria's delight in any new work was always enhanced by the hope of sharing it with her aunt.

In the autumn of 1791, Mr. and Mrs. Edgeworth went to England, leaving Maria in charge of the children at home.

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown,* 1791.

"Now that my father and mother are gone, you cannot imagine with what pleasure I reflect that we have so good and kind a friend as you, my dear Aunt Ruxton, so near us; and much do I wish that we could have the pleasure of your conversation and society, and much more I wish your superintending eye was over us. For though the unbounded kindness and confidence my father and my dear mother expressed towards me when we parted was enough to reassure a disposition more timid than mine naturally is, yet I cannot help feeling unusual timidity, when I look round me and think I am trusted with so valuable a charge.

"We had the pleasure of hearing last night that they landed safely at Holyhead, after a sixteen hours' passage, the first four hours of which were fine, but the remainder of the time was, my father says, remarkably rough. He says he was as sick as two, my mother as four. I hope my mother's voyage will do her good, for travelling always does; but she was very weak and far from well for a few days before she set out. They purposed being absent only till the first week in October; but allowing for the usual chances of travelling, we may think ourselves exceedingly happy if we see them in the middle of October. You, my dear aunt, who know the excessive kindness with which they treat me, more as a friend and equal, than as a daughter, can imagine how I miss the pleasures I have been SPOILED with. But yet I feel much more cheerful than I had any idea I should in their absence, because my sisters and Lovell are so kind to me, and all the children go on so well,

they appear just as usual, and I cannot help flattering myself that they have formed such excellent habits, and are so much disposed to do everything that is good, that they will not change for the worse even during the absence of my father and mother. Emmeline has the care of Charlotte, and I think there cannot be a more sweet-tempered child.

"My sisters and I hope you will not forget to give all our loves, one by one, to Letty and Sophy. If Margaret will do me the favour to accept of them, I will soon send her some more wee-wee stories, which she commissioned me to write if I could."

The first story, after the tale on "Generosity" which Maria wrote, was "The Bracelets," and some of the others now in the Parent's Assistant and Early Lessons. "Dog Trusty," and "The Honest Boy and the Thief," were written at this time. She used to write them on a slate and then read them out to her sisters, and if they were approved of, she copied them.

Mrs. Mary Powys[1] coming over at this time to Edgeworthstown, Mr. Edgeworth thought a change of scene would be good for Maria, and she paid a visit to Black Castle, leaving the little children in Mrs. Powys' care.

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton, after her return from Black Castle.

"*Edgeworthstown, October,* 1791.

"My dear mother is safe and well, and a fine new sister, I suppose you have heard. My very dear aunt,

[1] Daughter of Mr. Powys, of Shropshire, and the intimate friend of Mrs. Honora Edgeworth.

since the moment I came home till this instant my hands have trembled, and my head whirled with business, but the delightful hope of seeing my dear father and mother at Bristol is in fine perspective at the end. My father has just written the kindest letter possible, and Emmeline is transcribing his directions about our journey. We are to set off as soon as we can—on Tuesday morning next, I believe, for my father is extremely impatient for us to come over. I write by this night's post to Mr. Hanna, to take lodgings for us in Dublin, and we are, as you will see, to go by Holyhead. As to coming round by Black Castle, it is out of the question. For everybody's sake but my own, I regret this: for my own I do not, the few hours I should have to spend in your company would not, my dearest aunt, balance the pain of parting with you all again, which I did feel thoroughly, and if I had not had the kindest friends and the fullest occupation the moment I came home, I should have been in the lamentables a long time. Tell my dear uncle I never shall forget the kindness of his manner towards me during the whole of my stay at Black Castle, and the belief that he thinks well of his little niece adds much to her happiness, perhaps to her vanity, which he will say there was no occasion to increase. And now, dear Sophy, for your *roaring blade*, Thomas Day, Esq., he is in readiness to wait upon you —[her little brother, born the day before the news was received of Mr. Day's death]—whenever you can, will you have the charity to receive him? Name the day, my dear aunt, which will be the least inconvenient if you can, and Molly or John Langan shall bring him in the old or new chaise to your door, where I hope he will not salute you with a cry, but if he does do not be surprised. My father says he has written to you to ask

you to keep the new chaise in his absence, and to ask whether you could take little George into your service; have you received any such letter? I will send Hume, unopened, in Thomas' lap, and beg the F. Family may come back as it is; papa desires me to bring it.

"You see, my dear aunt, that I am in a great hurry by my writing, but no hurry, believe me, can drive out of my mind the remembrance of all the kindness I received at Black Castle. O, continue to love your niece; you cannot imagine the pleasure she felt when you kissed her, and said you loved her a thousand times better than ever you did before. Will you write one line to say you were in earnest? remembering all the time, how dangerous it is—*selon* Colonel Stuart, to give anything under your hand!"

The F. Family was "The Freeman Family," which is mentioned in Maria's Memoir of her father as the foundation of the story of "Patronage." It was, as she there says, related by him for the amusement of Mrs. Elizabeth Edgeworth, in 1787, as she was recovering from her confinement: the whole family assembled in her room every evening to hear the story, and Maria wrote it down next day, and if she was not sure of her recollection, she used to ask her father to re-tell the part of which she was doubtful, while they were out riding, and so fluently did he speak that when on her return she wrote it down, it was word for word without a correction.

Maria to Miss Sophy Ruxton.

1791.

"I must, and I will find time to write one line to you, my dear Sophy, to tell you, not that I like you,

not that your conversation interested me extremely, and that the ease and openness of your manners particularly suited my taste—for if *thou* hast not found out all this, I shall not trouble myself to tell it *thee*. But I write to complain of you and Letty for having spoiled me with kindness; I really miss your fondness without thinking of your merits; and this is no great compliment, but the truth. I hope Tomboy will deliver this with his own hand. How very good you are to take charge of him. He has orders to lay, if he can lift it —a clumsy writing-desk of Sister Maria's at your ladyship's feet. Don't let your pride prick up its ears, I am not going to give it to you, I am only going to beseech you to take care of it in my absence, and if you will, dear Sophy, it will be very agreeable to me to think it may sometimes bring me to your thoughts. I have but few friends in the world, but those few I hope I never shall lose. Wherever I am I shall always feel as I do now, that a very great proportion of the happiness of my life must depend upon the approbation and affection of the friends I love. I send the story I began for Margaret, merely to prove to you that I had actually begun—it is very badly done, and for my own credit I would not send it, only on the faith that you will not show it to anybody, and return it by Molly."[1]

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Mr. Smith's, Holyhead,*
"*Friday Morning.*

"We are this instant arrived, my dear aunt, after a thirty-three hours' passage; all the children safe and

[1] Molly Leavy, the daughter of Mr. Edgeworth's father's coachman, had been taken as a girl to England by Mrs. Honora Edgeworth,

well, but desperately sick; poor little Sneyd especially. The packet is just returning, and my head is so giddy that I scarcely know what I write, but you will only expect a few shabby lines to say we are not drowned. Mr. Ussher Edgeworth[1] and my Aunt Fox's servant saw us on board, and Mr. E. was so very good to come in the wherry with us and see us into the ship. We had the whole cabin to ourselves; no passenger, except one gentleman, son-in-law to Mr. Dawson, of Ardee, he was very civil to us, and assisted us much in landing, &c. I felt, besides, very glad to see one who knew anything even of the name of Ruxton. Adieu, my dear aunt; all the sick pale figures around me with faint voices send their love to you and my uncle."

The conveying so large a party, four girls and two little boys, so long a journey was a prodigious undertaking, and the responsibility was terrible to Maria at the time, though she afterwards dwelt only on the comic of the business. At one of the inns where they slept, the landlady's patience was so exhausted by the number of little people getting out of the carriage and the quantity of things that she exclaimed, "Haven't you brought the kitchen grate too!"

A tragi-comic circumstance was the finding when she arrived at Clifton, that a large parcel of guineas which she had put at the bottom of the great trunk had worn together so as to make a little heap of gold dust, and were all found to be light!

where she married George Bristow, who came from Mr. Day's service to that of his friend. He and she, admirable specimens of the best qualities of their several countries, lived and died servants and friends of the family. He died in 1834, but she lived till 1844.

[1] Brother to the Abbé Edgeworth, who resided in Dublin.

R. L. Edgeworth to Mr. Ruxton.

"*Prince's Buildings, Clifton,*
"*Nov.* 8, 1791.

"My dear Mr. Ruxton,

"I have this moment heard from Mr. Price, of S. Carolina. Dick is alive; married, and has made me a grandfather, and will probably be soon here. I am impatient to thank you for your great kindness to my young people, and for your sincere and friendly offers of assistance in their journey. I do assure you that there is nobody now in the world from whom I am more willing to receive obligations, or in whose prudence and activity I have more confidence. When life begins to move distinctly downwards, it gives me the greatest present pleasure and the most certain hopes of future satisfaction to perceive that the husband of my beloved sister becomes every day more united to me. You never mentioned anything to me about the project I mentioned instead of locks on the canal at Navan, by which I am taught that you are not yet near them. I am glad to hear that my namesake Richard is so much improved—où il y a d'étoffe on peut tout attendre. Give my kindest love to my nieces and nephews. Tell Sophy we were going to call our last little one after her, but the name of Honora has prior claims."

Maria's eldest brother, whose marriage is mentioned in the foregoing letter, came to Clifton and stayed a short time there. Though much separated from him during his short life—he died in America, in 1796—she regarded him always with the fondest affection.

Maria to Mr. Ruxton.

"*Prince's Buildings, Clifton,*
"*Dec.* 29, 1791.

"My dear Uncle,

"If you are going to the canal put this letter in your pocket, and do not be troubled in your conscience about reading it, but keep it till you are perfectly at leisure: for I have nothing strange or new to tell you. We live just the same kind of life that we used to do at Edgeworthstown; and though we move amongst numbers, are not moved by them, but feel independent of them for our daily amusement. All the PHANTASMAS I had conjured up to frighten myself, vanished after I had been here a week, for I found that they were but phantoms of my imagination, as you very truly told me. We live very near the Downs, where we have almost every day charming walks, and all the children go bounding about over hill and dale along with us. My aunt told me that once when you were at Clifton, when full dressed to go to a ball at Bath, you suddenly changed your mind, and undressed again, to go out a walking with her, and now that I see the walks, I am not surprised, even if you were not to have had the pleasure of my aunt's company. My father has got a *transfer* of a ticket for the Bristol library, which is an extremely fine one; and what makes it appear ten times finer is, that it is very difficult for strangers to get into. From thence he can get almost any book for us he pleases, except a few of the most scarce, which are by the laws of the library immoveable. No ladies go to the library, but Mr. Johns, the librarian, is very civil, and my mother went to his

rooms and saw the beautiful prints in Boydell's Shakespear. Lavater is to come home in a coach to-day. My father seems to think much the same of him that you did when you saw him abroad, that to some genius he adds a good deal of the mountebank. My father is going soon to Bath, Madame de Genlis is there, and he means to present the translation of 'Adele and Theodore' to her: he had intended to have had me introduced to her, but upon inquiry he was informed that she is not visited by demoiselles in England. Mrs. Kierney[1] lodges within two doors of us, and entertains us with a great deal of agreeable conversation; she is, we think, a woman of uncommon abilities, but she has an uncle[2] who is the object of our universal admiration. He has seen a great deal of the world, has read and thought a great deal, and speaks and *listens* extremely well. His manners are perfectly easy and polite, with something rather peculiar in his manner and expression, which adds to the effect of what he says. Mr. Lloyd is about sixty.

"Is your house roofed? and how does the new room go on? They go on building here all through the winter, frost or not: but every now and then we hear of one of these towers of Babel coming tumbling down. They are in such a hurry to get them finished and let for lodging-houses, that they build them so very slightly, it is impossible they should stand. About Clifton there are a great variety of strange-shaped houses, round, square, oblong, and triangular, which adds greatly to the picturesque beauty of the country,

[1] Mrs. Kierney was sister to Mr. Saunderson of Castle Saunderson, in the county of Cavan.

[2] Mr. Lloyd, of the county of Tipperary.

whatever it may do to the comfort of the inhabitants. The English seem even in their buildings proud of showing

'That they like their humour well.'

"For some time I kept a Bristol journal, which I intended to send to Black Castle in form of a newspaper, but I found that though every day's conversation and occurrences appeared of prodigious importance just at the moment they were passing, yet afterwards they seemed so flat and stale as not to be worth sending. I must however tell you that I had materials for one brilliant paragraph about the Duchess of York. Mr. Lloyd had seen the wondrous sight. 'When she was to be presented to the Queen, H.R.H. kept her Majesty waiting nearly an hour, till at last the Queen fearing that some accident had happened, sent to let the Duchess know that she was waiting for her. When the Duchess at length arrived, she was so frightened—for a Royal Duchess can be frightened as well as another—that she trembled and tottered in crossing the presence chamber so that she was obliged to be supported. She is very timid, and never once raised her eyes, so that our correspondent cannot speak decidedly as to the expression of her countenance, but if we may be allowed to say so, she is not a beauty, and is very low. She was dressed in white and gold, &c., &c.'

"There are two young ladies here whom we have sometimes met in our walks, who are so very like Sophy that we call them 'the Sophies.' My father's Sophy is different from ours, we despise her; he met *his* at Bristol, and we ours upon the Downs. I had never seen her till a few days ago. After having taken

a very pleasant walk by the side of a winding river, we turned suddenly, and I heard voices whisper, 'Maria, there's Sophy.' I looked up, and at the top of a steep bank I saw a group in parti-coloured garments, and amongst them a young lady in white, with a small black hat put a little on one side of her head: her hair had been in curls, but was a little dishevelled, of which however she did not seem to be in the least conscious, for she did not appear to be thinking of herself,—she was helping one of her companions down the bank with much care and kindness, but talking all the while with much eagerness. Give my love to Sophy, and tell her we all wish to be acquainted with her likeness. There are two young ladies here not the least like Sophy, whom my father went to call upon under the impression that they were his cousins. They are prodigiously fine ladies, like the Miss Broughtons in Evelina. Mrs. Kierney says they have a joint more in their arms than anybody else. The children all desire their love: they were playing the other day at going to Black Castle, and begged me to *be* Aunt Ruxton, which I assured them I would if I could! but they insisted on my *being* Sophy, Letty, and Margaret at the same time, and were not quite contented at my pleading this to be out of my power."

Maria to Miss Sophy Ruxton.

"*Clifton, March* 9, 1792.

"I wish, my dear Sophy, that you could know how often I think of you and wish for you, whenever we see or hear anything that I imagine you would like. How does your ward go on? My mother desires me to say

the kindest things to you, and assure yourself, my dear Sophy, that when my mother says the kindest, they are always at the same time the truest. She is not a person ever to forget a favour, and the care and trouble you are now bestowing on little Thomas Day will be remembered probably after you have forgotten it. But my father interrupts me at this moment, to say that if I am writing to Sophy I must give him some room at the end, so I shall leave off my fine speeches. We spend our time very agreeably here, and have in particular great choice of books. I don't think the children are quite as happy here as they used to be at home, it is impossible they should be, for they have neither the same occupations or liberty. It is however 'restraint that sweetens liberty,' and the joy they show when they run upon the Downs, hunting fossils, and clambering, is indeed very great. Henry flatters himself that he shall some time or other have the pleasure of exhibiting his collection to Cousin Sophy, and rehearses frequently in the character of showman. Dr. Darwin has been so good as to send him several fossils, &c., with their names written upon them, and he is every day adding to his little stock of *larning*. There is a very sensible man here who has also made him presents of little things which he values much, and he begins to *mess* a great deal with gums, camphor, &c. He will at least never come under Dr. Darwin's definition of a fool. 'A fool, Mr. Edgeworth, you know, is a man who never tried an experiment in his life.' My father tells me that Henry has acquired a taste for improving himself, and that all he has now to fear is my taste for improving him.

"We went the other day to see a collection of na-

tural curiosities at a Mr. Broadrib's, of Bristol, which entertained us very much. Emmeline tells me the gentleman's name is Broderip. My father observed he had but very few butterflies, and he said, 'No, sir, a circumstance which happened to me some time ago, determined me never to collect any more butterflies. I caught a most beautiful butterfly, thought I had killed it, and ran a pin through its body to fasten it to a cork: a FORTNIGHT afterward I happened to look in the box where I had left it, and I saw it writhing in agony: since that time I have never destroyed another.'

"My father has just returned from Dr. Darwin's, where he has been nearly three weeks: they were extremely kind, and pressed him very much to take a house in or near Derby for the summer. He has been, as Dr. Darwin expressed it, 'breathing the breath of life into the brazen lungs of a clock' which he had made at Edgeworthstown as a present for him. He saw the first part of Dr. Darwin's 'Botanic Garden;' £900 was what his bookseller gave him for the whole! On his return from Derby, my father spent a day with Mr. Kier, the great chemist, at Birmingham: he was speaking to him of the late discovery of fulminating silver, with which I suppose your ladyship is well acquainted, though it be new to Henry and me. A lady and gentleman went into a laboratory where a few grains of fulminating silver were lying in a mortar: the gentleman, as he was talking happened to stir it with the end of his cane, which was tipped with iron,—the fulminating silver exploded instantly, and blew the lady, the gentleman, and the whole laboratory to pieces! Take care how you go into laboratories with gentlemen, unless they

are like Sir Plume skilled in the 'nice conduct' of their canes.

"Have you seen any of the things that have been lately published about the negroes? We have just read a very small pamphlet of about ten pages, merely an account of the facts stated to the House of Commons. Twenty-five thousand people in England have absolutely left off eating West India sugar, from the hope that when there is no longer any demand for sugar the slaves will not be so cruelly treated. Children in several schools have given up sweet things, which is surely very benevolent; though whether it will at all conduce to the end proposed is perhaps wholly uncertain, and in the mean time we go on eating apple pies sweetened with sugar instead of with honey. At Mr. Keir's, however, my father avers that he ate excellent custards sweetened with honey. Will it not be rather hard upon the poor bees in the end?

"Mrs. Yearsly, the milkwoman, whose poems I dare say my aunt has seen, lives very near us at Clifton: we have never seen her, and probably never shall, for my father is so indignant against her for her ingratitude to her benefactress, Miss Hannah More, that he thinks she deserves to be treated with *neglect*. She was dying, absolutely expiring with hunger, when Miss More found her. Her mother was a washerwoman, and washed for Miss More's family; by accident, in a table-cloth which was sent to her was left a silver spoon, which Mrs. Yearsly returned. Struck with this instance of honesty, which was repeated to her by the servants, Miss More sent for her, discovered her distress and her genius, and though she was extremely eager in preparing some of her own works for the press, she threw

them all aside to correct Mrs. Yearsly's poems, and obtained for her a subscription of £600. In return, Mrs. Yearsly accused her of having defrauded her, of having been actuated only by vanity in bringing her abilities to light—a new species of vanity from one authoress to another—in short, abused her in the basest and most virulent manner. Would you go to see Mrs. Yearsly?

"Now the lady who gave us this account of Mrs. Yearsly was the most agreeable person we are acquainted with here, extremely polite in her manners, entertaining in her conversation—AND in her person and the expression of her countenance like—Aunt Ruxton! By accident my father one day mentioned his sister Ruxton to her, and she immediately exclaimed, 'Ruxton! what Mrs. Ruxton? Has that lady ever been abroad, and was she ever acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Danby?' Mr. and Mrs. Danby are Miss Place's intimate friends, and constantly correspond with her: she had often heard them speak of Mrs. Ruxton in terms—which are too high to be repeated to Miss Sophy Ruxton. Mr. Seymour, Mrs. Danby's father, is coming to live very near us in Prince's Place: I saw him for a moment, but only for a moment, at Miss Place's. Before I have done with Miss Place I must tell you an anecdote she told us: a very cross, ignorant old lady lodges with a very literary lady, and one day the literary lady had been conversing with some of her companions about Tasso, and forgot the old lady was in the room; the old lady fidgeted, hemmed, stirred the fire, sat down, got up, and giving as much expression as she could to her hips as she crossed the room, fairly flounced out. Presently a visitor after her own heart knocked at the door: she reappeared:

'O dear, ma'am,' cried she, 'I am so glad you've come, for here's Mrs. Q. and Mrs. Z. have been talking till I am quite sick of Tarso and all *the leather-backed gentlemen!*'

"Lo! I have almost filled the Bristol Chronicle, and have yet much that I wish to say to you, dear Sophy, and that I could tell you in one half hour, talking at my usual rate of nine miles an hour: when that will be, it is impossible to tell. My mother is now getting better. All the children are perfectly well: Bessy's eyes are not inflamed: Charlotte est faite à peindre et plus encore à aimer, if that were French."

R. L. Edgeworth continues.

"After Maria has said all the kind things that we think of you, and after exhausting all our small stock of news, she very generously gives me the paper to eke out with a repetition of our good wishes and our sense of your kindness to little Thomas Day. Pray tell Mr. Ruxton that I have been in some of the great cotton mills, near Derby, and that the owners are making immense fortunes. The mill for spinning woollen yarn, in which my brother-in-law is concerned, is also doing very well. The twenty shares in the Grand Trunk Canal, which Mr. Sneyd, my father-in-law, bought in at £4000 have paid all interest, and are now worth 20,000. When will the industry of Ireland vie with this country?"

R. L. Edgeworth to Mr. Ruxton.

"*Bristol, July* 5, 1792.

"My dear Mr. Ruxton,

"I thank you for the kind manner in which you informed us of the death of poor Thomas: my sister's

letters had led us to expect it. Mrs. Day died suddenly the twenty-first of last month, a few days after she left us. There does not, now that little Thomas is gone, exist even a person of the same name as Mr. Day. Our poor little boy enjoyed all the pleasures of which his short and infant existence was capable. From Sophy he had indulgence, attention, and amusement, and during his painful illness all the tenderness and care of your excellent wife. My compassion and solicitude for them was not less than for the child; but I hope that the remembrance of their own goodness will soon obliterate the painful impressions of his miserable end."

Maria to Miss Ruxton.

"*Ashton Bower, Clifton,*
"*August* 14, 1792.

"I have now lying by me two letters which I wrote the 13th July to have gone with the chain for Letty Corry by the 'Draper,' but the captain went without my parcel, and my letters by lying by so long have become so weary, flat, stale, and unprofitable, that I shall burn them.

"Last Saturday my poor brother Richard took leave of us to return to America. He has gone up to London with my father and mother, and is to sail from thence. We could not part with him without great pain and regret, for he made us all extremely fond of him. I wish my dear aunt could have seen him; he was very sensible of her kindness, and longed to have a letter from her. He is to come over in '95. Emmeline is still with Lady Holt and Mrs. Bracebridge, at Atherstone, in Warwickshire. Miss Bracebridge, grand-

daughter to Lady Holt, is a very agreeable companion to my sister, though some years younger, and she enjoys the society at Atherstone very much. They are most unwilling to part with her; but now she has been absent two months, and we all begin to *growl* for her return, especially now that my brother is gone, who was 'in himself a host.'

"I am engaged to go in October to pay a visit to Mrs. Charles Hoare. I believe you may remember my talking to you of this lady, and my telling you that she was my friend at school,[1] and had corresponded with me since. She was at Lisbon when we first came to England, and I thought I had little prospect of seeing her, but the moment she returned to England she wrote to me in the kindest and most pressing manner to beg I would come to her. Immediately after this, I dare not add that she is a most amiable and sensible woman, lest Sophy should exclaim, 'Ah! vanity! because she likes you, Mademoiselle Marie!'

"My uncle, William Sneyd, whom I believe you saw at Edgeworthstown, has just been with us for three weeks, and in that time filled five quires of paper with dried plants from the neighbouring rocks. He says there is at Clifton the richest harvest for botanists. How I wish you were here to reap it. Henry and I will collect anything that we are informed is worthy of your Serene Highness's collection. There is a species of cistus which grows on S. Vincent's rock, which is not, I am told, to be found in any other part of England. Helpless as I am and scoffed at in these matters, I will contrive to get some of it for you. A shoemaker

[1] Miss Robinson.

showed us a tortoise shell which he had for sale. I wished to have bought it for La Sophie, but upon inquiry I found it could not be had for less than a guinea; now I thought at the utmost it would not give Sophy above half-a-crown's worth of pleasure, so I left the shoemaker in quiet possession of his African tortoise. He had better fortune with two shells, admirals, which he sold to Lady Valentia for three guineas.

"We begin to be hungry for letters. The children all desire their love to you; Charlotte is very engaging, and promises to be handsome; Sneyd *is* and promises everything; Henry will, I think, through life always do more than he promises; little Honora is a sprightly blue-eyed child, at nurse with a woman who is the picture of health and simplicity,[1] in a beautiful romantic cottage, just such a cottage as you would imagine for the residence of health and simplicity. Lovell is perfectly well, and desires his kind love to you. Doctor Darwin has paid him very handsome compliments in his lines on the Barbarini vase, in the first part of the 'Botanic Garden,' which my father has just got.

"Has my aunt seen the 'Romance of the Forest?' It has been the fashionable novel here, everybody read and talked of it; we were much interested in some parts of it. It is something in the style of the 'Castle of Otranto,' and the horrible parts are we thought well worked up, but it is very difficult to keep Horror breathless with his mouth wide open through three volumes.

"Adieu, my dear Sophy: do not let my aunt forget me, for I love her very much; and as for yourself, take care not to think too highly of Cousin Maria, but see

[1] Molly Bird, whom Honora visited and found in health and simplicity in 1818.

her faults with indulgence, and you will I think find her a steady and affectionate friend."

Of their arrival at the place from which this letter is dated, Maria had not very agreeable recollections, for the first night she was in a room so very small, and so very hot, that her face was in the morning found to be swelled to a portentous size, and she narrowly escaped erysipelas and fever. Though not in general a good geographer, she was well acquainted with Clifton and all its neighbourhood, retained a vivid recollection of its beauties, and has made it the scene of four of her stories.

Maria to Miss S. Ruxton.

"*Fleet Street, London,*
"*October* 17, 1792.

"My dear Sophy,

"I have been with Mrs. Charles Hoare a week, and before I left Clifton had a budget in my head for a letter to you, which I really had not a moment's time to write. I left them all very well, just going to leave Ashton Bower, which I am not sorry for, though it has such a pretty romantic name; it is not a fit Bower to live in in winter, it is so cold and damp. They are going to Prince's Place again, and I dare say will fix there for the winter, though my father has talked of Bath and Plymouth.

"I find in half rubbed out notes in my pocket-book, 'Sophy — Slave-ship: Sophy — Rope-walk: Sophy — Marine acid: Sophy — Earthquake: Sophy — Glass-house,' &c.: and I intended to tell you au longue of these.

"We went on board a slave-ship with my brother, and saw the dreadfully small hole in which the poor slaves are stowed together, so that they cannot stir. But probably you know all this.

"Mrs. Hoare was at Lisbon during two slight shocks of an earthquake; she says the night was remarkably fine, there was no unwholesome feeling that she can remember in the air, immediately preceding the shock: but they were sitting with the windows open down to the ground, looking at the clearness of the sky, when they felt the shock. The doors and windows, and all the furniture in the room shook for a few instants: they looked at one another in silent terror. But in another instant everything was still, and they came to the use of their voices. Numbers of exaggerated accounts were put into the public papers, and she received vast numbers of terrified letters from her friends in England. So much for the earthquake. The marine acid I must leave till I have my father at my elbow, lest in my great wisdom I should set you wrong.

"About the glasshouse: there is one Stephens, an Englishman, who has set up a splendid glasshouse at Lisbon, and the Government have granted him a pine wood sixteen miles in extent to supply his glasshouse with fuel. He has erected a theatre for his workmen, supplied them with scenes, dresses, &c.; and they have acquired such a taste for theatrical amusements, that it has conquered their violent passion for drinking which formerly made them incapable of work three days in the week; now they work as hard as possible, and amuse themselves for one day in the week.

"Of the beauty of the Tagus, and its golden sands, and the wolves which Mrs. Hoare had the satisfaction

of seeing hunted, I must speak when I see you. Mrs. Hoare is as kind as possible to me, and I spend my time at Roehampton as I like: in London that is not entirely possible. We have only come up to town for a few days. Mr. Hoare's house at Roehampton is an excellent one indeed: a library with nice books, small tables upon castors, low sofas, and all the other things which make rooms comfortable. Lady Hoare, his mother, is said to be a very amiable, sensible woman: I have seen her only once, but I was much entertained at her house at Barnelms, looking at the pictures. I saw Zeluco's figure in Le Brun's Massacre of the Innocents. My aunt will laugh, and think that I am giving myself great airs when I talk of being entertained looking at pictures; but assure her that I remember what she used to say about taste, and that without affectation I have endeavoured to look at everything worth seeing."

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Stanhope Street, London,*
"*Nov.* 6, '92.

"I left Roehampton yesterday, and took leave of my friend Mrs. Charles Hoare, with a high opinion of her abilities, and a still higher opinion of her goodness. She was exceedingly kind to me, and I spent most of my time with her as I liked: I say most, because a good deal of it was spent in company where I heard of nothing but chariots and horses, and curricles and tandems. Oh, to what contempt I exposed myself in a luckless hour by asking what a tandem was! I am going in a few days to meet Mrs. Powys at Bath.

Since I have been away from home I have missed the society and fondness of my father, mother, and sisters more than I can express, and more than beforehand I should have thought possible: I long to see them all again. Even when I am most amused I feel a void, and now I understand what an aching void is, perfectly well. You know they are going back to Prince's Buildings to the nice house we had last winter; and Emmeline writes me word that the great red puddle which we used to call the Red Sea, and which we were forced to wade through before we could get to the Downs, will not this winter be so terrible, for my father has made a footpath for his 'host.'"

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Clifton, Dec.* 13, '92.

(The day we received yours.)

"The day of retribution is at hand, my dear aunt: the month of May will soon come, and then, when we meet face to face, and voucher to voucher, it shall be truly seen whose letter-writing account stands fullest and fairest in the world. Till then, 'we'll leave it all to your honour's honour.' But why does my dear aunt write, 'I can have but little more time to spend with my brother in my life?'[1] as if she was an old woman of one hundred and ninety-nine and upwards! I remember, the day I left Black Castle, you told me, if you recollect, that 'you had one foot in the grave;' and though I saw you standing before me in perfect health, sound wind and limb, I had the weakness to feel frightened, and never to think of examining where

[1] Mrs. Ruxton lived thirty-nine years after this letter was written.

your feet really were. But in the month of May we hope to find them safe in your shoes, and I hope that the sun will then shine out, and that all the black clouds in the political horizon will be dispersed, and that 'freemen' will by that time eat their puddings and hold their tongues. Anna and I stayed one week with Mrs. Powys at Bath, and were very thoroughly occupied all the time with seeing and—I won't say with being seen; for though we were at three balls, I do not believe any one saw us. The Upper Rooms we thought very splendid, and the playhouse pretty, but not so good as the theatre at Bristol. We walked all over Bath with my father, and liked it extremely: he showed us the house where he was born."

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Gloucester Row, Clifton,*
"*July* 21, 1793.

"My dear Aunt,

"My father is just returned to us from Mr. Keir's, where he has been laid up almost a fortnight with the gout; he is still in a cloth shoe, but pretty well, and in good spirits. How disappointed you must have been when you heard he was stopped midway in his flight! I would not write to tell you such bad news; no one but the great man himself could *afford* to give you so much pain. Come over to us, since we cannot go to you. 'Ah, Maria, you know I would come if I could.' But can't you, who are a great woman, trample upon impossibilities? It is two years since we saw you, and we are tired of *recollecting* how kind and agreeable you were. Are you the same Aunt

Ruxton? Come and see whether we are the same, and whether there are any people in the world out of your own house who know your value better.

"During the hot weather the thermometer was often 80, and once 88. Mr. Neville, a banker, has taken a house here, and was to have been my father's travelling companion, but left him at Birmingham: he has a fishing-stool and a wife. We like the fishing-stool and the wife, but have not yet seen the family. I hope, for the good of my country and of my cousin Fitzherbert,[1] that the 'bloody wars' will soon be over, and that he may return from the Continent with cheap laurels. My father last night wrote a letter of recommendation to you for a Mr. Jimbernat, a Spanish gentleman, son to the King of Spain's surgeon, who is employed by his Court to travel for scientific purposes: he drank tea with us, and seems very intelligent. Till I saw him I thought a Spaniard must be tall and stately: one may be mistaken.

"Adieu, for there are matters of high import coming, fit only for the pen of pens."

R. L. Edgeworth in continuation.

"The matters of high importance, my dear sister, have been already communicated to you in brief, and indeed cannot be detailed by any but the parties. Dr. Beddoes, the object of Anna's[2] vows, is a man of abilities, and of great name in the scientific world as a naturalist and chemist: good-humoured, good-natured, a man of honour and virtue, enthusiastic and sanguine, and very

[1] Mrs. Ruxton's eldest son, who died young.

[2] Maria's youngest *own* sister.

fond of Anna. He is sincere and candid. Mr. Ruxton dined with us the very day he first spoke upon the subject to any of us.

"If Mr. Ruxton means to recover the effects of this summer's campaign, he must come to Bath next winter. Pray, dear friends, do come, and we will meet you there and pass one winter agreeably together,—a matter of some consequence in this short life. Adieu, dear, beloved sister. If affection was a tangible commodity, what bales would besiege your door!"

Mrs. Elizabeth Edgeworth to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Nov.*, 1793.

"I cannot let the car depart without writing a line to you to thank you for giving us so much of your company here, as well as for your kindness and *refreshing* conversation at Black Castle after the troubles of our sea voyage. I do not mean, by refreshing, *cooling*, though I think Dr. Beddoes and Mr. Edgeworth agreed in a dispute they lately had about the word, that 'cooling' was the true meaning of it: on the contrary, my dear sister, nothing could be more warm and affectionate than your reception of us."

Emmeline continues.

"My dear Aunt,

"I hope the trees will take kindly to their new situation, and grow and flourish under your fostering care. My father, mother, and Maria having expounded all the news, there is not even the ghost of an idea left for me; and as you graciously intend us another visit, I will leave all the pretty things,

and all the silly things, and all sorts of things till that time."

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Nov.* 18, 1793.

"My dearest Aunt,

"I should certainly have behaved ill if I had seen your admirable group—at least if I had seen them with your eyes; and I think, from your description, we saw the fore-paws of the seal, and the grandfather and grandson and the whistler, as plainly as if we had dined with you. Whatever you were, we were much entertained with the militia.

"This evening my father has been reading out Gay's 'Trivia,' to our great entertainment. I wished very much, my dear aunt, that you and Sophy had been sitting round the fire with us. If you have 'Trivia,' and if you have time, will you humour your niece so far as to look at it? I think there are many things in it which will please you, especially the 'Patten and the Shoeblack,' and the old woman hovering over her little fire in a hard winter. Pray tell me if you like it. I had much rather make a bargain with any one I loved to read the same book with them at the same hour, than to look at the moon like Rousseau's famous lovers. 'Ah! that is because my dear niece has no taste and no eyes.' But I assure you I am learning the use of my eyes main fast, and make no doubt, please Heaven I live to be sixty, to see as well as my neighbours.

"I am scratching away very hard at the Freeman Family.

"Cæsar has been bit by a mad dog."

Cæsar was one of the few dogs that Mr. Edgeworth allowed in the yard. He had, though an excellent shot and excessively fond of shooting, entirely given it up on his first marriage. He had when a lad a favourite dog called "Hannibal," but having chastised him one day—unjustly as he afterwards found—the dog walked out of the house, and was never more seen or heard of: this grieved him so much, that he never again had a favourite dog, or liked to have dogs about him.

Maria to Miss S. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Jan.* 22, 1794.

"I am not ungrateful to you, my dear Sophy, for your kind letters, though I have been long in answering them. I was tempted to wait another post in hopes of telling you of my mother's safety; but as I know the workings of imagination, I would not leave you to them. It was more like the weakness of my mind than the strength of yours, 'Crown of Glory,' as the beggar called you, to think you were neglected.

"Mr. Fox[1] and Lady Anne were here last Sunday, and are returning immediately to Kilkenny. Mr. Fox, I believe, got but one recruit out of John Langan,[2] and to all our inquiries for men for 'my uncle,' John shakes his head, puts up his shoulder, or changes from leg to leg, which are all in him sad tokens of distress. Give my love to Letty, and tell her that her rose is in good preservation, and is, along with the quaking grass,

[1] Mr. Edgeworth's nephew, who at this time commanded the Longford militia.

[2] John Langan was the steward, and in face and figure the prototype of Thady in Castle Rackrent.

blooming in my bureau. We have heard no more news yet from Dr. Beddoes."

Maria to Miss Sophy Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Feb.* 23, 1794.

"My mother was better on Saturday than she has been since her confinement.[1] I hope my dear aunt has got quite well: does she twist her brown-caterpillar tippet round her arms in the way that my father twisted it one night to protect her from the cold, which made her look like the statue of the writhing man and the snake? The latest telegraph news arrived here last night in a letter to Lovell from my father. The speaker behaved like himself in everything, except in having unluckily lost the Memorial. My father wrote a new one, approved of in flattering terms by Colonel Doyle; in still more flattering terms by Lord Charlemont. My father went to see the Longfords all warm and alive. Mr. Edward Pakenham just came over with *a* Mr. Clements —*the* Mr. Clements who erected signal-posts along the coast in England, and who was said to be coming over here to establish similar posts; but he has come only to take possession of a good estate. Observe, ladies and gentlemen all, that the words 'telegraph' and 'telegraphy' have been carefully avoided in this new Memorial, because both party spirit and national pride dislike the sound of the *French* telegraph.

"Thank my aunt and thank yourself for kind inquiries after 'Letters for Literary Ladies.' I am sorry to say they are not as well as can be expected, nor are they likely to mend at present: when they are fit to be

[1] The birth of her last child, William, Jan. 27, 1794.

seen—if that happy time ever arrives—their first visit shall be to Black Castle. They are now disfigured by all manner of crooked marks of Papa's critical indignation, besides various abusive marginal notes, which I would not have you see for half-a-crown sterling, nor my aunt for a whole crown as pure as King Hiero's; with which crown I am sure you are acquainted, and know how to weigh it as Honora did at eight years old, though Mr. Day would not believe it. I think my mother is better this evening, but she is so very cheerful when she has a moment's respite, that it deceives us. She calls Lovell the Minute Philosopher at this instant, because he is drawing with the assistance of a magnifying glass with a universal joint in his mouth; so that one eye can see through it while he draws a beautifully small drawing of the new front of the house. I have just excited his envy even to clasping his hands in distraction, by telling him of a man I met with in the middle of 'Grainger's Worthies of England,' who drew a mill, a miller, a bridge, a man and horse going over the bridge with a sack of corn, all visible, upon a surface that would just cover a sixpence."

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, May* 8, 1794.

"My father has just had a letter from Anna,[1] who is safely landed in England. She says she suffered less than she ever did, and 'luckily escaped a watery grave.' A boatful of passengers was rowed by such a set of drunken Charons, that it was half filled with water, and

[1] Married at Edgeworthstown to Dr. Beddoes, April 17, 1794.

nearly lost. My father is perfectly well, and very busy out of doors and in doors. The *snail* of the banisters of the new staircase has just crawled into the hall, and certain beauteous pillars have appeared, whose future place of destination no one will tell me, and I cannot invent. Your hated triangular hatbox of a passage is going to be destroyed, and an entrance, *dans tous les règles*, made into the hall; so that hereafter no one shall complain of having lost their way. My mother, when they lived at Davenport, once found Mr. Whitehurst—the great Mr. Whitehurst, who has written a Theory of the Earth, and therefore must be great—standing in a passage full of doors, lifting up his hands and eyes in an agony of doubt and despair, and saying to himself, 'Well, I can't find my way out of all these doors. I wish anybody COULD tell me my way to my room.'

"My father brought back certain books from Black Castle, amongst which I was glad to see the Fairy Tales; and he has related, with various embellishments suited to the occasion, the story of Fortunatus, to the great delight of young and old, especially of Sneyd, whose eyes and cheeks expressed strong approbation, and who repeated it afterwards in a style of dramatic oratory, which you would have known how to admire.

"We are reading a new book for children, 'Evenings at Home,' which we admire extremely. Has Sophy seen them? And has she seen the fine Aurora Borealis which was to be seen last week, and which my father and Lovell saw with ecstasies? The candles were all put out in the library, and a wonderful bustle made, before I rightly comprehended what was going on."

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown*, 1794.

"How melancholy the advertisement of Black Castle[1] looks in the newspapers! The pretty drawing-room, the turret (which I love,) and all the happy days I have spent with you full in my recollection. Will the cheerful bookcases be left empty shelves? Who will sit upon the sofa? I know you will think more about the trees and shrubs you have planted with your own hands; but for these I do not pretend to have such a near interest. I wish them well very sincerely notwithstanding, and I hope they will be treated with humanity by whoever is to have the pleasure of walking in your walks. The blue sugar-chest is the only thing in the house that I hate, and I hate it because it always sat upon the sofa beside you, just where I wanted to sit, and always made more noise with its padlock than I with my tongue. Sugar-chest, I hate you! I will look for the volume of the 'Tableau de Paris' which you think I have; and if it is in the land of the living, it shall be coming forth at your call. Do you remember our reading in it of the garçon perruquier who dresses in black on a Sunday, and leaves his every-day clothes, white and heavy with powder, in the middle of the room, which he dares not peep into after his metamorphosis? I like to read as well as to talk with you, my dear aunt, because you mix the grave and gay together, and put your long finger upon the very passages which my short, stumpy one was just starting forward to point out, if it could point.

[1] Mr. and Mrs. Ruxton intended at this time to go with their family to reside in England, but did not do so.

"You are very good indeed to wish for Toys and Tasks, but I think it would be most unreasonable to send them to you now. We are a very small party, now that my father, Anna, and Lovell are gone; but I hope we shall be better when you come."

"Toys and Tasks" was one of the chapters in "Practical Education," which Maria had now begun to write.

Maria to Mrs. Elizabeth Edgeworth.

"*Edgeworthstown*, 1794.

"My dear Mother,

"All's well at home; the chickens are all good and thriving, and there is plenty of provender, and of everything that we can want or wish for: therefore we all hope that you will fully enjoy the pleasures of Black Castle without being anxious for your bairns. Darcy goes to Dublin to-morrow. I send again for candles, lest there should be no light in the hall or in my lady's bower. Emmeline does not send for tea, because I told her you would bring some from Mrs. Armstrong. I hope my zeal has not been as it sometimes is, too officious. I have told Kitty[1] that no fruit, alias raisins, are to be had in Dublin, and she says, 'Very well, ma'am.'

"Your girthweb is safely lodged in your dressing-room, and my Aunt Charlotte's parcel is safely lodged in her drawer, and thank her for the sweet legacy she

[1] Catherine Billamore, an Englishwoman, a faithful servant and friend of the family for thirty-three years: she died in my service in 1820, and was buried in the family vault, and a tablet to her memory placed in the church wall.

left me: it was sugar candy, and it gave rise to some observations on crystallisation which will not be forgotten. Honora's little cheeks are very rosy, and she looks, to use Kitty's favourite expression, 'as fresh as a rose in June.' There is a little basket in the chaise which I some time ago gave to Henry, and if it is agreeable to you he wishes you would give it to Miss Margaret Ruxton, who wants a work-basket more than he does.

"The key of the chaise seat is inside it, and Stewart and Animadversions on the School for Scandal; and I wish you would look over my dear Aunt Ruxton's shoulder whilst she reads Stewart's chapters on Dreaming and Imagination. I see that the London audience have made the same observation which you did, that in tragedy, Miss Wallis's expression is of bodily rather than of mental pain.

"Pray tell my dear aunt that I am not ungrateful for all the kindness she showed to me while I was with her: it rejoiced my heart to hear her say, when she took leave of me, that she did not love me less for knowing me better.

"Kitty wakened me this morning saying, 'Dear, ma'am, how charming you smell of coals! quite charming!' and she snuffed the ambient air."

Coals were burned at Black Castle, more agreeable to Mrs. Billamore's English nostrils than the bog-turf used at Edgeworthstown.

"Darcy," mentioned in the foregoing letter, was the carrier or carman, whose visits to Dublin were of great consequence; as, except meat and bread, all articles of food were at that time to be had only in Dublin, and, as appears by this letter, not always even there.

Maria to Miss Sophy Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, July* 2, 1794,
having the honour to be the fair day of Edgeworthstown, as is well proclaimed to the neighbourhood by the noise of pigs squeaking, men bawling, women brawling, and children squealing, &c.

"My dear Sophy,

"My aunt's kind letter gave me a great deal of pleasure. I have been lately convinced, against my will I am afraid, that a magnanimous-minded mortal ought not to be elated upon receiving a letter directed to *self;* but no one has yet attempted to convince me that it is unbecoming to feel or express gratitude for it. I am glad you are still at Black Castle; while you are there, there is hope that you may come here. Consider that Rostrevor is in the air, and Kinsale nobody knows where, and summer goes and winter comes, and life passes, and what then?—a picture of a skeleton, which to Sneyd's unprejudiced imagination looks very droll!

"I will tell you what is going on, that you may see whether you like your daily bill of fare. I hope when you come, you will like it better than I did a tremendous bill of fare, which was presented to me by the powdered waiter of the famous turtle-dressing Mr. Weeks, of the Bush,[1] the first night we got, stranger wights, to Bristol, without father or mother to prompt. You, my dear Sophy, who have presence of mind, and

[1] Afterwards the Montague Hotel.

are tall, would, I am persuaded, have cast your eye down the long list of partridges, hares, pheasants, fowl, wild fowl, turtle and mock turtle, without dismay, and would, with a becoming degree of civil courage have said to the silent, half-bowing, superciliously expectant waiter, 'Beefsteaks and potatoes, sir, if you please.' But it would have required all your good nature and friendship for me, and all my aunt's, to have kept you from laughing out at my unutterable confusion.

"There are, an' please you, ma'am, a great many good things here. There is a balloon hanging up, and another going to be put on the stocks: there is soap made, and making from a receipt in Nicholson's Chemistry: there is excellent ink made, and to be made by the same book: there is a cake of roses just squeezed in a vice, by my father, according to the advice of Madame De Lagaraye, the woman in the black cloak and ruffles, who weighs with unwearied scales, in the frontispiece of a book, which perhaps my aunt remembers, entitled 'Chemie de gout, et de l'odorat.' There are a set of accurate weights, just completed by the ingenious Messrs. Lovell and Henry Edgeworth, partners: for Henry is now a junior partner, and grown an inch and a half upon the strength of it in two months. The use and ingenuity of these weights I do, or did, understand; it is great, but I am afraid of puzzling you and disgracing myself attempting to explain it; especially, as my mother says, I once sent you a receipt for purifying water with charcoal, which she avers to have been above, or below, the comprehension of any rational being.

"My father bought a great many books at Mr. Dean's sale. Six volumes of Machines Approuvés, full of prints

of paper mills, gunpowder mills, machines pour ramonter les batteaux, machines pour—a great many things which you would like to see I am sure over my father's shoulder. And my aunt would like to see the new staircase, and to see a kitcat view of a robin red-breast sitting on her nest in a saw-pit, discovered by Lovell, and you would both like to pick Emmeline's fine strawberries round the crowded oval table after dinner, and to see my mother look so much better in the midst of us.

"If these delights thy soul can move,
Come live with us and be our love."

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Aug.* 11, 1794.

"My dear Aunt,

"Nothing wonderful or interesting, nothing which touches our hopes or fears, which either moves us to laugh or to be doleful, can happen without the idea of Aunt Ruxton immediately arising. This, you will think, is the preface to at least either death or marriage; but it is *only* the preface to a history of Defenders.

"There have been lately several flying reports of Defenders, but we never thought the danger *near* till to-day. Last night a party of forty attacked the house of one Hoxey, about half-a-mile from us, and took, as usual, the arms. They have also been at Ringowny, where there was only one servant left to take care of the house; they took the arms, and broke all the windows. To-day Mr. Bond, our high sheriff, paid us a *pale* visit, thought it was proper something should be done for the internal defence of the town of Edgeworthstown and the County of Longford, and wished

my father would apply to him for a meeting of the county. My father first rode over to the scene of action, to inquire into the truth of the reports; found them true, and on his return to dinner found Mr. Thompson, of Clonfin, and Captain Doyle, nephew to the general and the wounded colonel, who is now at Granard. Captain Doyle will send a sergeant and twelve to-morrow; to-night a watch is to sit up, but it is supposed that the sight of two redcoats riding across the country together will keep the evil sprites from appearing to mortal eyes 'this watch.' My father has spoken to many of the householders, and he imagines they will come here to a meeting to-morrow, to consider how best they can defend their lands and tenements; they bring their arms to my father to take care of. You will be surprised at our making such a mighty matter of a visit from the Defenders, you who have had soldiers sitting up in your kitchen for weeks; but you will consider that this is our first visit.

"The arts of peace are going on prosperously. The new room is almost built, and the staircase is completed: long may we live to run up and down it."

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Sept.* 20, 1794.

"My dearest Aunt Ruxton,

"Do you remember an old shoemaker who used to wear a broad black collar round his neck, and who always looked as if he was going to be hanged? This man, known by the name of Old Moor, has a son called by the name of Young Moor. He is not, however, the captain of a band of robbers, nor yet a hero; but he has

just made himself a sergeant, and in this character, with all his red, blue, green, and yellow *un*blushing military honours, he made his appearance in a conspicuous seat at Church on Sunday, to the admiration and amusement of a most respectable and devout congregation. This morning my father came down to breakfast early, with the intention of being at Longford early to attend a secret committee, and he was drinking his chocolate and talking to Lovell about the composition of certain white lights, when Samuel[1] came in with 'Sir, here are some soldiers, a whole parcel on 'em, sir, who have had a brawl, if you'd please to see 'em, sir. I believe they have enlisted my lord's painter.' 'My lord's painter!' said my father; 'what is his name?' 'My lord's painter—he as painted Lord Granard's house—he is at the door.'

"Upon inquiry my father found that 'my lord's painter' was an old grey-headed man, who had been made drunk by one Mott Farrell, a man of very bad character in this town, who had first forced a guinea into his pocket, and then robbed him of it, and then insisted upon his being duly enlisted in his Majesty's service. The soldier who presented the poor painter, and his bundle of brushes tied up in a handkerchief, was little Mackin, who not many weeks ago was a car-driver in his honour's service; but he drew on and off his gloves with so fine an air, called my father 'my dear,' and talked so confidently of his knowing too much of 'military service,' that none could dare to see the car-driver through the regimentals. In spite, however, of little Mackin the quondam car-driver's knowledge of

[1] Samuel Essington, an Englishman.

military affairs, my father could not be persuaded that the painter was duly enlisted: he discharged him.

"A few minutes after we thought that the painter and his brushes were at liberty, Samuel re-entered with poached eyes. 'Sir, they have seized my lord's painter again, and are forcing him into a house in the town.' My father waxed wroth at this piece of tyranny, and he went to enforce justice. Now the person who had seized the painter after his discharge was Sergeant Harry Moor. He made his appearance with a constable, half yellow wig, half black hair—Charlie Monaghan, the husband of the celebrated washerwoman: they stood opposite the library window. My father at the door of the new hall was reading to the painter his examinations, the ladies crowding the bow window, when lo! they saw young Moor draw and 'brandish high *th' Hibernian* sword.' Charlie Monaghan, with a stick in his hand, beat, or seemed to beat, his coat, but Charlie Monaghan was not a hero, and young Moor escaped from the arm of the law, and ran off to fight another day. All this passed like a flash of lightning: there was no thunder. My father did not see the flash of the sword, and when he looked up, it was over.

"A warrant was immediately made out to conduct the hero to gaol for a contempt of his Majesty's justices. The constable and John Langan and Mr. Lovell Edgeworth went to seize Harry at his castle, whither he had taken refuge. They were to go to the back entrance of the said castle. My father got into his chaise, which was waiting for him to go to Longford, and meant to do himself the honour of receiving Sergeant Moor as he went through the town. In the middle of the street stood the undaunted hero. My father, confident that

his emissaries were at the back premises, thought he had the gentleman safe; but the moment he heard my father give orders to a soldier to seize him, he darted into his house. Now, by some mistake, Monaghan was not ready at the back door, and Moor escaped. My father, however, knowing that a sergeant was a man of too much consequence to be entirely lost, determined to send kind inquiries after him to his commanding officer, and pursued his way to Longford with 'Turnor on Crimes and Punishments' in the chaise with him.

"About half-past five o'clock my father returned, looking extremely tired, and, to our surprise, quite hoarse. 'After I have eaten something, for I have eaten nothing since morning,' said he, 'I will tell you my adventures.' Dinner was soon over, and we drew round the sofa to hear. 'I was reading in the chaise, when the stage-coach passed me full drive, a chaise following, driver drunk, as usual. I was withdrawing my eyes from this ugly spectacle, when I saw that one of the wheels of the coach was just coming off. I called to the coachman, but he did not heed. As we came up, the coachman whipped his horses into a gallop, and I called and called, till I was so hoarse I could call no more, in vain, till a jolt came, and crash——'"

The rest of the letter is lost, except a fragment, from which it appears that the hero, Henry Moor, was on the top of this overturned stage, and was captured.

To Miss Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown,* 1794.

"I will treat you, my dear Letty, like a lady for once, and write to you upon blue-edged paper, because

you have been ill: if you should be well before you receive this, I shall repent of the extravagance of my friendship. I believe it was you—or my aunt, the teller of all good things—who told me of a lady who took a long journey to see her sister, who she heard was very ill; but, unfortunately, the sister was well before she got to her journey's end, and she was so provoked, that she quarrelled with her well sister, and would never have anything more to do with her.

"You will look very blank when you come back from the sea, and find what doings there have been at Black Castle in your absence. Anna was extremely sorry that she could not see you again before she left Ireland; but you will soon be in the same kingdom again, and *that is one great point gained,* as Mr. Weaver, a travelling astronomical lecturer, who carried the universe about in a box, told us. 'Sir,' said he to my father, 'when you look at a map, do you know that the east is always on your right hand, and the west on your left?' 'Yes,' replied my father, with a very modest look, 'I believe I do.' 'Well,' said the man of learning, '*that's one great point gained.*'

"It is fortunate for you, dear Letty, that Miss Beaufort is not coming over to Ireland as she intended; but don't be too secure, perhaps she may leave London as soon as you get there, or perhaps you may cross on the seas! I dare say you will not leave pretty Black Castle without many a longing lingering look. I wish you would gather a nosegay of quaking grass for me. I love it very much, and I have never seen it since I came to Ireland, except in your drawing-room, till Anna brought a bunch of it with her from Black Castle. I am not nearly so lazy as I was when you were obliged to exhort

me to leave my butterfly of immortal memory. Give my love to dear Sophy, and thank her for Marianne;[1] she charges me to like it for her sake, but I will say more, I like it for its own sake: I think the story very interesting, and Marianne a very good girl, she makes however too many reflections, and too long. Madame Miran is very well drawn, and amiable, but I like Madame Dorsin's character better than any I ever met with in any novel. I was much disappointed that she had so little business to do in the story: I am sure she would have done it well if she had been allowed. I don't much like M. Clemal's patched-up death-bed repentance; the legacy he leaves to Marianne makes him quite a good boy again in her eyes. Madame Dutour is an excellent comic character, she has made us laugh heartily. I should think her scolding is much better in French because we see all the drollery, and not all the vulgarity. Do you approve of the catastrophe being brought about by sending the hero to the Bastile to cure him of inconstancy? I think Marianne is in rather an awkward situation when she goes to let her prisoner out, upon condition that he should ask pardon of her and his mamma. Nothing but a temporary, convenient fit of frenzy, and desperate fevers in both hero and heroine could have brought up the dignity of their characters again after all this."

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown,* 1795.

"My father returned late on Friday night, bringing with him a very bad and a very good thing; the

[1] Vie de Marianne, par Marivaux.

bad thing was a bad cold—the good is Aunt Mary Sneyd. Emmeline was delayed some days at Lichfield by the broken bridges, and bad roads, floods and snows, which have stopped man, and beast, and mail coaches. Mr. Cox, the man who sells camomile drops under the title of Oriental Pearls, wrote an apology to my Aunt Mary for neglecting to send the Pearls, in the following elegant phrase, 'That the mistake she mentioned he could no ways account for but by presuming that it must have arisen from impediments occasioned by the inclemencies of the season!'

"When my father went to see Lord Charlemont, he came to meet him, saying, 'I must claim relationship with you, Mr. Edgeworth. I am related to the Abbé Edgeworth, who is I think an honour to the kingdom—I should say to human nature.'

"Canal and navigation property sink by hundreds and thousands daily. An egg at Bristol costeth threepence, says Anna!"

To Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, April* 11, 1795.

"My father and Lovell have been out almost every day, when there are no robbers to be committed to jail, at the Logograph.[1] This is the new name instead of the Telegraph, because of its allusion to the logographic printing press, which prints words instead of letters. Phænologue was thought of, but Logograph sounds better. My father will allow me to manufacture an

[1] This name, invented to suit the anti-Gallican prejudices of the day, mentioned in a previous letter, was afterwards rejected, and Telegraph re-adopted.

essay on the Logograph, he furnishing the solid materials and I spinning them. I am now looking over, for this purpose, Wilkins' Real Character, or an Essay towards a Universal Philosophical Language. It is a scarce and very ingenious book; some of the phraseology is so much out of the present fashion, that it would make you smile: such as the synonym for a little man, a Dandiprat. Likewise two prints, one of them a long sheet of men with their throats cut, so as to show the windpipe whilst working out the different letters of the alphabet. The other print of all the birds and beasts packed ready to go into the ark.

"Sir Walter James has written a very kind and sensible letter to my father, promising all his influence with his Viceregal brother-in-law about the telegraph. My father means to get a letter from him to Lord Camden, and present it himself, though he rather doubts whether, all things taken together, it is prudent to tie himself to Government. The raising the militia has occasioned disturbances in this county. Lord Granard's carriage was pelted at Athlone. The poor people here are robbed every night. Last night a poor old woman was considerably roasted: the man, who called himself Captain Roast, is committed to jail, he was positively sworn to here this morning. Do you know what they mean by the White Tooths? Men who stick two pieces of broken tobacco pipes at each corner of the mouth, to disguise the face and voice."

"*April* 20.

"Here is a whirlwind in our county, and no angel to direct it, though many booted and spurred desire no

better than to ride *in* it. There is indeed an old woman in Ballymahon, who has been the guardian angel of General Crosby; she has averted a terrible storm, which was just ready to burst over his head. The General, by mistake, went into the town of Ballymahon, before his troops came up; and while he was in the inn, a mob of five hundred people gathered in the street. The landlady of the inn called General Crosby aside, and told him, that if the people found him they would certainly tear him to pieces. The General hesitated, but the abler general, the landlady, sallied forth and called aloud in a distinct voice, 'Bring round the chaise-and-four for the gentleman *from* Lanesborough, who is going *to* Athlone.' The General got into the chaise incog., and returning towards Athlone met his troops, and thus effected a most admirable retreat.

"Anna has for the present I fear given up all intention of coming to us. She says she had a very agreeable letter from Mrs. Beaufort, still in London. Doctor Beaufort is a very obliging man indeed; he is become quite a correspondent of my father's, for he has written two or three letters about some furniture[1] my father troubled him to purchase for him in London, and there is something so friendly, and such an active desire to please in his letters, that I wish he may never have finished buying furniture. I congratulate you on the prospect of the Beauforts' return: I am sure their

[1] I was at this time in London with my father and mother, and I well remember the purchasing this furniture, and the paper for a room, which Mr. Edgeworth was fitting up for the Miss Sneyds, when they came this year to live at Edgeworthstown: the paper and the furniture are still in that room in wonderful preservation.

society will add much to your happiness, and I hope that I shall see Miss Beaufort.

"*Monday Night.*

"Three letters for Maria!!! everybody exclaims. Thank you for my gay 'Evenings at Home,' and your gloomy 'Caleb Williams.' I have not yet lost my propensity to call him Caleb *Jenkins*. My head is at this instant so full of Falkland and his trunk full of horrors, that I am scarcely in a condition to tell you of vulgar realities—I have just come to where that curious fool Caleb lifts up the lid of the trunk.

"Richard[1] and Lovell are at the Bracket Gate. I hope you know the Bracket Gate, it is near Mr. Whitney's, and so called, as tradition informs me, from being painted red and white like a bracket cow. I am not clear what sort of an animal a bracket cow is, but I suppose it is something not unlike a dun cow and a gate joined together. Richard and Lovell have a nice tent, and a clock, and white lights, and are trying nocturnal telegraphs, which are now brought to satisfactory perfection. My love to Sophy, and tell her how much I miss her. We have now the passage of the Agamemnon of Æschylus, of the messengers and the signals, the names of all the stations *are* given.

"I am finishing 'Toys and Tasks;' I wish I might insert your letter to Sneyd, with the receipt for the dye, as a specimen of experiments for children. Sneyd with sparkling eyes returns you his sincere thanks, and my mother with her love sends you the following lines, which she composed to-day for him:

[1] His last visit to Ireland. He returned to America, and died there, in 1796.

'To give me all that art can give,
My aunt and mother try:
One teaches me the way to live,
The other how to *dye*.'

"But though she makes epigrams, my mother is far from well."

Richard adds.

"11 *o'clock*.

"I have just returned from trying the night telegraph, and am happy to say it is as distinct, if not more so, than the day one. I hope when I see you to be able to give you a pompous account of our expedition."

Maria to Sophy Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Oct.* 21, 1795.

"I have a great many things to tell you: for instance, about a man who called to show things so curious, that nobody in this county or the next to it knew, or could understand the like, except my Lady Moira, and how the curiosity-man discovered that my father had a 'soaring genius of his own,' and how he said a long grace before adding up pounds shillings and pence, and how my father all the while kept his eye fixed upon him, and his hand ready to seize his collar, in case he should have gone stark mad upon the spot: how all these things came to pass, and more equally well worth recording, shall you hear when you come, from the everlasting tongue of tongues."

This year "Letters for Literary Ladies," Maria's first work, was published by Johnson.

To Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown,*
"*Saturday Night, Jan.* 1796.

"What can we say, my dear aunt, to comfort you for the loss of the great telegraphers? If you could hear all the good things they say of you, perhaps you would think it some consolation. You have nursed and *entertained* them to good purpose, for they both look much better than we expected. My father walks lame, but quicker than any lame man I ever saw, and I am quite of your William's opinion, that 'he makes a house alive the moment he comes into it.' I hope William aforesaid has not thrown down another tray full of glass. I thought when my mother told me of it, that I saw the fall, and heard the crash, and beheld the wooden-faced culprit standing in the midst of the wreck. My father is gone to a Longford committee, where he will I suppose hear many dreadful Defender stories: he came home yesterday fully persuaded that a poor man in this neighbourhood, a Mr. Houlton, had been murdered, but he found he was only *kilt*, and 'as well as could be expected,' after being twice robbed and twice cut with a bayonet. You, my dear aunt, who were so brave when the county of Meath was the seat of war, must know that we emulate your courage; and I assure you in your own words, 'that whilst our terrified neighbours see nightly visions of massacres, we sleep with our doors and windows unbarred.'

"I must observe though, that it is only those doors and windows which have neither bolts nor bars, that we leave unbarred, and these are more at present than we wish, even for the reputation of our valour. All that

I crave for my own part is, that if I am to have my throat cut, it may not be by a man with his face blackened with charcoal. I shall look at every person that comes here very closely, to see if there be any marks of charcoal upon their visages. Old wrinkled offenders I should suppose would never be able to wash out their stains; but in others a *very* clean face will in my mind be a strong symptom of guilt—clean hands proof positive, and clean nails ought to hang a man."

To Miss S. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Feb.* 27, 1796.

"Long may you feel impatient to hear from your friends, my dear Sophy, and long may you express your impatience as agreeably. I have a great deal bottled, or rather bundled up for you. Though I most earnestly wish that my father was in that situation[1] which Sir T. Fetherstone now graces, and though my father had done me the honour to let me copy his Election letters for him, I am not the least infected with the electioneering rage. Whilst the Election lasted we saw him only a few minutes in the course of the day, then indeed he entertained us to our heart's content; now his mind seems relieved from a disagreeable load, and we have more of his company.

"You do not mention Madame Roland, therefore I am not sure whether you have read her; if you have only read her in the translation which talks of her Uncle Bimont's dying of a 'fit of the gout *translated*

[1] M.P. for the County of Longford.

to his chest,' you have done her injustice. We think some of her memoirs beautifully written, and like Rousseau: she was a great woman and died heroically, but I don't think she became more amiable, and certainly not more happy by meddling with politics; *for*—her head is cut off, and her husband has shot himself. I think if I had been Mons. Roland I should not have shot myself for her sake, and I question whether he would not have left undrawn the trigger if he could have seen all she intended to say of him to posterity: she has painted him as a harsh, stiff, pedantic man, to whom she devoted herself from a sense of duty; her own superiority, and his infinite obligations to her, she has taken sufficient pains to blazon forth to the world. I do not like all this, and her duty work, and her full-length portrait *of* herself *by* herself. The foolish and haughty Madame De Boismorrel, who sat upon the sofa, and asked her if she ever wore feathers, was probably one of the remote causes of the French revolution: for Madame Roland's Republican spirit seems to have retained a long and lively remembrance of this aristocratic visit.

"As soon as the blind bookseller[1] can find them for us, we shall read Miss Williams' Letters, though our curiosity is much diminished by my aunt's last sentence. I am glad we both prefer the same parts in Dr. Aikin's Letters: I liked that on the choice of a wife, but I beg to except the word *helper*, which is used so often and is associated with a helper in the stables. Lovell dined with Mr. Aikin at Mr. Stewart's, at Edin-

[1] A pedlar who travelled through the country, and sometimes picked up at sales curious books new and old.

burgh, and has seen the Count d'Artois, who he says has rather a silly face, especially when it smiles. Sneyd is delighted with the four volumes of 'Evenings at Home,' which we have just got, and has pitched upon the best stories, which he does not, like M. Dalambert, spoil in the reading—'Perseverance against Fortune,' 'The Price of a Victory,' and 'Capriole.' We were reading an account of the pinna the other day, and very much regretted that your pinna's brown silk tuft had been eaten by the mice—what will they not eat?—they have eaten my thimble case! I am sorry to say that, from these last accounts of the pinna and his cancer friend, Doctor Darwin's beautiful description is more poetic than accurate. The cancer is neither watchman nor market-woman to the pinna, nor yet his friend: he has free ingress to his house it is true, and is often found there, but he does not visit on equal terms, or on a friendly footing, for the moment the pinna gets him in he shuts the door and eats him; or if he is not hungry, kills the poor shrimp and keeps him in the house till the next day's dinner. I am sorry Doctor Darwin's story is not true."

"*Saturday Night.*

"I meant to class your impatience to hear from me amongst the number of your virtues, and not of your faults, dear Sophy. We were much entertained with the violent opposite opinions of the two gentlemen in your dialogue about Madame Roland. It is not fair to judge of a person's character by their opinions, but I think it is difficult to avoid guessing, and I guess that Madame Roland would not have been much affected by the epithet 'odious.'

"I do not know whether you ever heard of a Mr. Pallas, who lives at Grouse Hall. He lately received information that a certain Defender was to be found in a lone house, which was described to him; he took a party of men with him in the night, and got to the house very early in the morning: it was scarcely light. The soldiers searched the house, but no man was to be found. Mr. Pallas ordered them to search again, for that he was certain the man was there: they searched again, in vain. They gave up the point, and were preparing to mount their horses, when one man who had stayed a little behind his companions, saw something moving at the end of the garden behind the house: he looked again, and beheld a man's arm come out of the ground. He ran towards the spot and called his companions, but the arm had disappeared; they searched, but nothing was to be seen, and though the soldier persisted in his story he was not believed. 'Come,' said one of the party, 'don't waste your time here looking for an apparition among these cabbage-stalks, come back once more to the house.' They went to the house, and there stood the man they were in search of, in the middle of the kitchen.

"Upon examination, it was found that a secret passage had been practised from the kitchen to the garden, opening under an old meal chest with a false bottom, which he could push up and down at pleasure. He had returned one moment too soon.

"In the 'Star' of the 14th, is an account of a play called 'The Iron Chest,' the plot taken from 'Caleb Williams.' My aunt said the *time* of the novel should have been thrown back many years: the play supposes

Falkland to have lived in the time of Charles I. It did not succeed.[1]

"I beg, dear Sophy, that you will not call my little stories by the sublime title of 'my works,' I shall else be ashamed when the little mouse comes forth. The stories are printed and bound the same size as 'Evenings at Home,' but I am afraid you will dislike the title; my father had sent the 'Parent's Friend,' but Mr. Johnson has degraded it into the 'Parent's Assistant,' which I dislike particularly, from association with an old book of arithmetic called the 'Tutor's Assistant.'"

This was the first appearance of the "Parent's Assistant," in one small volume, with the "Purple Jar," which afterwards formed part of "Rosamond."

Mrs. Elizabeth Edgeworth to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown,* 1796.

"My dear Sister,

"The post does not fly swiftly enough for your impatience—an impatience for which I return you a thousand thanks. You must remember that your last kind letter to me was in Mr. Ruxton's letter to Mr. Edgeworth last Wednesday, and that your very active brother wrote an answer that very night; and be it known to you that our post[2] goes out but three times a week, though yours goes out every day. And be it also

[1] It has since been acted with great applause, and continues to be a favourite on the stage.

[2] The post town of Edgeworthstown was at this time Mullingar, fourteen miles distant—we have now posts twice a day, and the office in the village close to us.

known to you that I went to Foxhall, and that the moment I entered the room Lady Anne told me she could not have you now; and I am sure you will now turn your steps to Edgeworthstown. I should be very much obliged to you to bring your own horses and postillion with you, as we have parted with one of ours, and have only George, and he may have to take Mr. Edgeworth to Dublin."

Maria continues.

"My dear Aunt,

"How glad we shall be to see your eager eyes looking out at the busy telegraphers. Since he came home my father has made a very pretty little portable telegraph. I do not describe it, as I hope you will see it, and that you will exclaim, 'Oh, Maria, it is much better than I expected!'

"We have been entertained with 'Art and Nature.'[1] Hannah is weak to the last, but she is the only person one cares a penny about. Rebecca is quite a goose, and the man, as you say, a monster. Lovell snatches the pen from me."

Lovell continues.

"We are going on practising, and yesterday we talked, in spite of the violent rain, a distance of four miles with great *éclat*."

Maria goes on.

"I am glad Lovell has told you about the violent rain: I hope my father's telegraph will not often want *fog signals*. To-day's 'Star' says the English telegraph 'has fog signals up to-day.'"

[1] By Mrs. Inchbald.

To Mrs. Ruxton.

"1796.

"We heard from Lovell last post. He had reached London, and waited immediately on Colonel Brownrigg, who was extremely civil, and said he would present him any day he pleased to the Duke of York. He was delighted with the telegraphic prospect in his journey: from Nettlebed to Long Compton, a distance of fifty miles, he saw plainly. He was afraid that the motion of the stage would have been too violent to agree with his model telegraph—'his pretty, delicate little telly,' as Lovell calls it. He therefore indulged her all the way with a seat in a post-chaise, 'which I bestowed upon her with pleasure, because I am convinced that, when she comes to stand in the world upon ground of her own, she will be an honour to her guardian, her parents, and her country.'"

In 1797 Johnson wished to publish more volumes of the "Parent's Assistant" on fine paper, with prints, and Mrs. Ruxton asked me to make some designs for them, which Maria mentions in the following letter:—

Maria to Miss Sophy Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown,* 1797.

"I am really obliged to Miss Beaufort for all she has done for me, and we long to see the drawings; but yet we had rather be good and patient than run the chance of their travelling by any but the best possible mode of conveyance. Perhaps when my father returns he may be trusted with them. Be so kind as to send us Doctor

Beaufort's address, and also the direction to a woman or a society in Dublin famous for calendering gowns. Mention at the same time in what degree of relationship they stand to the three calenders in the Arabian Tales. I am going on with 'Practical Education,' and have been up early for three mornings! My father has written a chapter for me on grammar, and is writing one on mechanics. I do not think 'Plain Sense' by any means in the first class of novels; it wants dialogue, wit, humour, and good writing: but it seems to be written with good intentions, and is far superior to the generality of romances: supposed to be written by Miss Jackson,[1] a friend of Dr. Darwin's."

Maria had now begun to write some of the stories which were afterwards published under the title of "Moral Tales," but which she had at first intended as a sequel to the "Parent's Assistant;" and she had begun to think of writing "Irish Bulls."

To Sophy Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Oct.* 1797.

"I do not like to pour out the gratitude I feel for your unremitting kindness to me, my dear Sophy, in vain thanks; but I may as well pour it out in words, as I shall probably never be able to return the many good turns you have done me. I am not nearly ready yet for 'Irish Bulls.' I am going directly to 'Parent's Assistant.' Any good anecdotes from the age of five to fifteen, good latitude and longitude, will suit me; and

[1] Author of "Rhoda."

if you can tell me any pleasing misfortunes of emigrants, so much the better. I have a great desire to draw a picture of an anti-Mademoiselle Panache, a well-informed, well-bred French governess, an emigrant.

"By the blind bookseller my father will send you some books, and I hope that we shall soon have finished Godwin, that he may set out for Black Castle. There are some parts of his book[1] that I think you will like much—'On Frankness,' and 'Self-taught Genius;' but you will find much to blame in his style, and you will be surprised that he should have written a dissertation upon English style. I think his essay on Avarice and Profusion will please you, even after Smith: he has gone a step further. My mother seems much interested by the description of the Inquisition in the Italian. Did not my aunt tell me there was not as much truth in it *as could be wished.* When we showed Miss Beaufort's beautiful drawing[2] to little William, he asked immediately if those little boys were not blowing bubbles. I am going to write a story for boys,[3] which will, I believe, make a volume to follow the 'Good French Governess.' My father thinks a volume of trials and a volume of plays would be good for children. He met the other day with two men who were ready to go to law about a horse which one had bought from the other, because he had one little fault. 'What is the fault?' said my father. 'Sir, the horse was standing with us all the other day in our cabin at the fire, and plump he fell down upon the middle of the

[1] Essays, by the author of "Caleb Williams."

[2] Engraved afterwards as frontispiece to the story of the Orphans in the Parent's Assistant.

[3] The Good Aunt.

fire and put it out; and it was a mercy he didn't kill my wife and children as he fell into the midst of them all. But this is not all, sir; he strayed into a neighbour's field of oats, and fell down in the midst of the oats, and spoiled as much as he could have eaten honestly in a week. But that's not all, sir; one day, please your honour, I rode him out in a hurry to a fair, and he lay down with me in the ford, and I lost my fair."

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Oct.*, 1797.

"I rejoice very heartily that your favourable opinion of 'Practical Education' does not change with its change of dress. The prophecies of so good a judge as Dr. Beaufort are most comfortable words. I wish I could continue to give you good news of my mother. These days of bettering only make her relapses more melancholy: when she has a moment's respite, she is as ready to converse with us all as if she forgot her illness."

Mrs. Edgeworth died in November, 1797.

I had in the spring of that year paid my first visit at Edgeworthstown with my mother and sister. My father had long before been there, and had frequently met Mr. Edgeworth at Mrs. Ruxton's, as my father had for some years resided at Navan, of which parish he had succeeded my grandfather as Rector, and resided at Flower Hill, a small place close to Black Castle. In 1795 he was presented to the living of Collon, in the County of

Louth, where he resided from that time. His vicarage was within five minutes' walk of the residence of Mr. Foster, then Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, the dear friend of Mr. Edgeworth, who came to Collon in the spring of 1798 several times, and at last offered me his hand, which I accepted.

Maria to Miss Beaufort.

"*Edgeworthstown, May* 16, 1798.

"Whilst you, my dear Miss Beaufort, have been toiling in Dublin, my father has been delighting himself in preparations for June. The little boudoir looks as if it intends to be pretty. This is the only room in the house which my father will allow to be finished, as he wishes that your taste should finish the rest. Like the man who begged to have the eclipse put off, we have been here praying to have the spring put off, as this place never looks so pretty as when the lilacs and laburnums are in full flower. I fear, notwithstanding all our prayers, that their purple and yellow honours will be gone before your arrival. There is one other flower which I am sure will not be in blow for you, 'a little western flower called love in idleness.' Amongst the many kindnesses my father has shown me, the greatest, I think, has been his permitting me to see his heart *à decouverte;* and I have seen, by your kind sincerity and his, that, in good and cultivated minds, love is no *idle* passion, but one that inspires useful and generous energy. I have been convinced by your example of what I was always inclined to believe, that the power of feeling affection is increased by the cultivation of the understanding. The wife of an Indian yogii (if

a yogii be permitted to have a wife) might be a very affectionate woman, but her sympathy with her husband could not have a very extensive sphere. As his eyes are to be continually fixed upon the point of his nose, hers in duteous sympathy must squint in like manner; and if the perfection of his virtue be to sit so still that the birds (vide Sacontala) may unmolested build nests in his hair, his wife cannot better show her affection than by yielding her tresses to them with similar patient stupidity. Are there not European yogiis, or men whose ideas do not go much further than le bout du nez? And how delightful it must be to be chained for better for worse to one of this species! I should guess—for I know nothing of the matter—that the courtship of an ignorant lover must be almost as insipid as a marriage with him; for 'my jewel' continually repeated, without new setting, must surely fatigue a little. The Irish *Cushla machree* may be translated into Gray's fine poetry, 'Dear as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,' but the associations with Gray, and poetry, and literature increase the pleasure of the apostrophe. Those who believe that simple language can alone express the warm and tender feelings of the heart, have not perhaps considered that a certain degree of elegance becomes habitual, and therefore *toute simple* in some minds: for instance, the allusion to a chrysalis which you and I lately saw in a *billet doux*. Into all these reflections I have been led by the recollection of letters and conversations which I could never have seen or heard but for your kindness.

"You call yourself, dear Miss Beaufort, my friend and companion: I hope you will never have reason to repent beginning in this style towards me. I think

you will not find me encroach upon you. The overflowings of your kindness, if I know anything of my own heart, will fertilise the land, but will not destroy the landmarks. I do not know whether I most hate or despise the temper which will take an ell where an inch is given. A well-bred person never forgets that species of respect which is due to situation and rank: though his superiors in rank treat him with the utmost condescension, he never is 'Hail fellow well met' with them; he never calls them Jack or Tom by way of increasing his own consequence.

"I flatter myself that you will find me gratefully exact *en belle fille*. I think there is a great deal of difference between that species of ceremony which exists with acquaintance, and that which should always exist with the best of friends: the one prevents the growth of affection, the other preserves it in youth and age. Many foolish people make fine plantations, and forget to fence them; so the young trees are destroyed by the young cattle, and the bark of the forest trees is sometimes injured. You need not, dear Miss Beaufort, fence yourself round with very strong palings in this family, where all have been early accustomed to mind their boundaries. As for me, you see my intentions, or at least my theories, are good enough: if my practice be but half as good, you will be content, will you not? But Theory was born in Brobdignag, and Practice in Lilliput. So much the better for *me*. I have often considered, since my return home, as I have seen all this family pursuing their several occupations and amusements, how much you will have it in your power to add to their happiness. In a stupid or indolent family, your knowledge and talents would be thrown

away; here, if it may be said without vanity, they will be the certain source of your daily happiness. You will come into a new family, but you will not come as a stranger, dear Miss Beaufort: you will not lead a new life, but only continue to lead the life you have been used to in your own happy, cultivated family.

"Believe me to be,

"Most affectionately yours."

I had been for the greater part of the month of May, 1798, in Dublin with my father and mother; there disturbances had already begun, and the rebellion had broken out in many parts of Ireland.

Mr. Edgeworth came to Dublin, and we were married on the 31st of May—Mr. Edgeworth's birthday—at St. Anne's Church, by my brother William. We set off from the church door for Edgeworthstown.

Soon after we had passed the second stage from Dublin, one of the carriage wheels broke down. Mr. Edgeworth went back to the inn, then called the Nineteen-mile House,[1] to get assistance. Very few people were to be found, and a woman who was alone in the kitchen came up to him and whispered, "The boys (the rebels) are hid in the potato furrows beyond." He was rather startled at this intelligence, but took no notice. He found an ostler who lent him a wheel, which they managed to put on, and we drove off without being stopped by any of *the boys*. A little further on I saw something very odd on the side of the road before us. "What is that?" "Look to the other side—don't look at it!" cried Mr. Edgeworth; and when we had passed he said

[1] Now Enfield: a railway station.

it was a car turned up, between the shafts of which a man was hung—murdered by the rebels.

We reached Edgeworthstown late in the evening. The family at that time consisted of the two Miss Sneyds, Maria, Emmeline, Bessy, Charlotte, (Lovell was then at Edinburgh,) Henry, Sneyd, Honora, and William. Sneyd was not twelve years old, and the other two were much younger. All agreed in making me feel at once at home, and part of the family; all received me with the most unaffected cordiality: but from Maria it was something more. She more than fulfilled the promise of her letter; she made me at once her most intimate friend; and in all the serious concerns of life, and in every trifle of the day, treated me with the most generous confidence.

Maria to Miss Sophy Ruxton.[1]

"*Edgeworthstown, June* 20, '98.

"I have this moment received your letter, and you seem so anxious to hear from home, that I write instantly. Hitherto all has been quiet in our county, and we know nothing of the dreadful disturbances in other parts of the country but what we see in the newspapers. I am sorry my uncle and Richard were obliged to leave you and my dear aunt, as I know the continual state of suspense and anxiety in which you must live while they are away. I fear that we may soon know by experience what you feel, for my father sees in to-night's paper that Lord Cornwallis is coming over here as Lord-Lieutenant; and he thinks it will be his duty

[1] Mr. and Mrs. Ruxton and their family were at this time residing in North Wales.

to offer his services in any manner in which they can be advantageous. Why cannot we be left in peace to enjoy our happiness? that is all we have the conscience to ask! We are indeed happy: the more I see of my friend and mother, the more I love and esteem her, and the more I feel the truth of all that I have heard you say in her praise. I do not think I am *much* prejudiced by her partiality for me, though I do feel most grateful for her kindness. I never saw my father at any period of his life appear so happy as he does, and has done for this month past; and you know that he *tastes* happiness as much as any human being can. He is not of the number of those 'qui avalent leurs plaisirs, il sait les gouter.' So little change has been made in the way of living, that you would feel as if you were going on with your usual occupations and conversation amongst us. We laugh and talk, and enjoy the good of every day, which is more than sufficient. How long this may last we cannot tell. I am going on in the old way, writing stories. I cannot be a captain of dragoons, and sitting with my hands before me would not make any of us one degree safer. I know nothing more of 'Practical Education:' it is advertised to be published. I have finished a volume of wee-wee stories, about the size of the 'Purple Jar,' all about Rosamond. 'Simple Susan' went to Foxhall a few days ago, for Lady Anne to carry to England.

"My father has made our little rooms so nice for us; they are all fresh painted and papered. Oh, rebels! oh, French! spare them! We have never injured you, and all we wish is to see everybody as happy as ourselves."

To Miss Sophy Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Aug.* 29, '98.

"We have this moment learned from the sheriff of this county, Mr. Wilder, who has been at Athlone, that the French have got to Castlebar. They changed clothes with some peasants, and so deceived our troops. They have almost entirely cut off the carbineers, the Longford militia, and a large body of yeomanry who opposed them. The Lord-Lieutenant is now at Athlone, and it is supposed that it will be their next object of attack. My father's corps of yeomanry are extremely attached to him, and seem fully in earnest; but, alas! by some strange negligence their arms have not yet arrived from Dublin. My father this morning sent a letter by an officer going to Athlone, to Lord Cornwallis, offering his services to convey intelligence or reconnoitre, as he feels himself in a most terrible situation, without arms for his men, and no power of being serviceable to his country. We who are so near the scene of action cannot by any means discover what *number* of the French actually landed: some say 800, some 1,800, some 18,000, some 4,000. The troops march and countermarch, as they say themselves, without knowing where they are going, or for what.

"Poor Lady Anne Fox! she is in a dreadful situation; so near her confinement she is unable to move from Foxhall to any place of greater safety, and exposed every moment to hear the most alarming reports. She shows admirable calmness and strength of mind. Francis and Barry set out to-morrow morning for England: as they do not go near Conway, my father advises me not to send by them 'Simple Susan' and sundry

other little volumes which I wish were in your kind hands.

"We have nothing to wish for but peace. My mother has made a charming picture of S. Peter, copied from that at Foxhall, which Mr. Fox kindly lent to her. God send the French may soon go, and that you may soon come."

"*Mrs. Fallon's Inn, Longford,*
"*Sept.* 5, '98.

"My dearest Aunt,

"We are all safe and well, and have had two most fortunate escapes from rebels and from the explosion of an ammunition cart. Yesterday we heard, about ten o'clock in the morning, that a large body of rebels, armed with pikes, were within a few miles of Edgeworthstown. My father's yeomanry were at this moment gone to Longford for their arms, which Government had delayed sending. We were ordered to decamp, each with a small bundle: the two chaises full, and my mother and Aunt Charlotte on horseback. We were all ready to move, when the report was contradicted: only twenty or thirty men were now, it was said, in arms, and my father hoped we might still hold fast to our dear home.

"Two officers and six dragoons happened at this moment to be on their way through Edgeworthstown, escorting an ammunition cart from Mullingar to Longford: they promised to take us under their protection, and the officer came up to the door to say he was ready. My father most fortunately detained us: they set out without us. Half-an-hour afterwards, as we were quietly sitting in the portico, we heard—as we

thought close to us—the report of a pistol, or a clap of thunder, which shook the house. The officer soon afterwards returned, almost speechless; he could hardly explain what had happened. The ammunition cart, containing nearly three barrels of gunpowder, packed in tin cases, took fire and burst, half way on the road to Longford. The man who drove the cart was blown to atoms—nothing of him could be found; two of the horses were killed, others were blown to pieces and their limbs scattered to a distance; the head and body of a man were found a hundred and twenty yards from the spot. Mr. Murray was the name of the officer I am speaking of: he had with him a Mr. Rochfort and a Mr. Nugent. Mr. Rochfort was thrown from his horse, one side of his face terribly burnt, and stuck over with gunpowder, carried into a cabin; thought he would die, but they now say he will recover. The carriage has been sent to take him to Longford. I have not time or room, my dear aunt, to dilate or tell you half I have to say. If we had gone with this ammunition, we must have been killed.

"An hour or two afterwards, however, we were obliged to fly from Edgeworthstown. The pikemen, three hundred in number, actually were within a mile of the town. My mother, Aunt Charlotte, and I rode; passed the trunk of the dead man, bloody limbs of horses, and two dead horses, by the help of men who pulled on our steeds: all safely lodged now in Mrs. Fallon's inn."

Before we had reached the place where the cart had been blown up, Mr. Edgeworth suddenly recollected that he had left on the table in his study a list of the yeomanry corps, which he feared might endanger

the poor fellows and their families if it fell into the hands of the rebels. He galloped back for it—it was at the hazard of his life—but the rebels had not yet appeared. He burned the paper, and rejoined us safely.

The landlady of the inn at Longford did all she could to make us comfortable, and we were squeezed into the already crowded house. Mrs. Billamore, our excellent housekeeper, we had left behind for the return of the carriage which had taken Mr. Rochfort to Longford; but it was detained, and she did not reach us till the next morning, when we learned from her that the rebels had not come up to the house. They had halted at the gate, but were prevented from entering by a man whom she did not remember to have ever seen; but he was grateful to her for having lent money to his wife when she was in great distress, and we now, at our utmost need, owed our safety and that of the house to his gratitude. We were surprised to find that this was thought by some to be a suspicious circumstance, and that it showed Mr. Edgeworth to be a favourer of the rebels! An express arrived at night to say the French were close to Longford: Mr. Edgeworth undertook to defend the gaol, which commanded the road by which the enemy must pass, where they could be detained till the King's troops came up. He was supplied with men and ammunition, and watched all night; but in the morning news came that the French had turned in a different direction, and gone to Granard, about seven miles off; but this seemed so unlikely, that Mr. Edgeworth rode out to reconnoitre, and Henry went to the top of the Court-House to look out with a telescope. We were all at the windows of a room in the inn looking into the street, when we saw people running, throw-

ing up their hats and huzzaing. A dragoon had just arrived with the news that General Lake's army had come up with the French and the rebels, and completely defeated them at a place called Ballinamuck, near Granard. But we soon saw a man in a sergeant's uniform haranguing the mob, not in honour of General Lake's victory, but against Mr. Edgeworth; we distinctly heard the words, "that young Edgeworth ought to be dragged down from the Court-House." The landlady was terrified; she said Mr. Edgeworth was accused of having made signals to the French from the gaol, and she thought the mob would pull down her house; but they ran on to the end of the town, where they expected to meet Mr. Edgeworth. We sent a messenger in one direction to warn him, while Maria and I drove to meet him on the other road. We heard that he had passed some time before with Major Eustace, the mob seeing an officer in uniform with him went back to the town, and on our return we found them safe at the inn. We saw the French prisoners brought in in the evening, when Mr. Edgeworth went after dinner with Major Eustace to the barrack. Some time after, dreadful yells were heard in the street: the mob had attacked them on their return from the barrack—Major Eustace being now in coloured clothes, they did not recognise him as an officer. They had struck Mr. Edgeworth with a brickbat in the neck, and as they were now, just in front of the inn, collaring the major, Mr. Edgeworth cried out in a loud voice, "Major Eustace is in danger." Several officers who were at dinner in the inn, hearing the words through the open window, rushed out sword in hand, dispersed the crowd in a moment, and all the danger was over. The military patrolled the streets, and the sergeant who had

made all this disturbance was put under arrest. He was a poor, half-crazed fanatic.

The next day, the 9th of September, we returned home, where everything was exactly as we had left it, all serene and happy, five days before—only five days, which seemed almost a lifetime, from the dangers and anxiety we had gone through.

Maria to Miss Sophy Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Sept.* 9, '98.

"You will rejoice, I am sure, my dear Sophy, to see by the date of this letter that we are safe back at Edgeworthstown. The scenes we have gone through for some days past, have succeeded one another like the pictures in a magic lantern, and have scarcely left the impression of reality upon the mind. It all seems like a dream, a mixture of the ridiculous and the horrid. 'Oh ho!' says my aunt, 'things cannot be very bad with my brother, if Maria begins her letters with magic lantern and reflections on dreams.'

"When we got into the town this morning we saw the picture of a deserted, or rather a shattered village —many joyful faces greeted us at the doors of the houses—none of the windows of the new houses in Charlotte Row were broken: the mob declared they would not meddle with them because they were built by the two good ladies, meaning my aunts.

"Last night my father was alarmed at finding that both Samuel and John,[1] who had stood by him with the utmost fidelity through the Longford business, were at

[1] John Jenkins, a Welsh lad: both he and Samuel thought better of it and remained in our service.

length panic-struck: they wished now to leave him. Samuel said: 'Sir, I would stay with you to the last gasp, if you were not so foolhardy,' and here he cried bitterly; 'but Sir, indeed you have not heard all I have heard. I have heard about two hundred men in Longford swear they would have your life.' All the town were during the whole of last night under a similar panic, they were certain the violent Longford yeomen would come and cut them to pieces. Last night was not pleasant, but this morning was pleasant—and why it was a pleasant morning I will tell you in my next."

"*Sept.* 19.

"I forgot to tell you of a remarkable event in the history of our return; all the cats, even those who properly belong to the stable, and who had never been admitted to the honours of the sitting in the kitchen, all crowded round Kitty with congratulatory faces, crawling up her gown, insisting upon caressing and being caressed when she reappeared in the lower regions. Mr. Gilpin's slander against cats as selfish, unfeeling animals, is thus refuted by stubborn facts.

"When Colonel Handfield told the whole story of the Longford mob to Lord Cornwallis he said he never saw a man so much astonished. Lord Longford, Mr. Pakenham, and Major Edward Pakenham, have shown much warmth of friendship upon this occasion.

"Enclosed I send you a little sketch, which I traced from one my mother drew for her father, of the situation of the field of battle at Ballinamuck, it is about four miles from The Hills. My father, mother, and I rode to look at the camp; perhaps you recollect a pretty turn in the road, where there is a little stream

with a three-arched bridge: in the fields which rise in a gentle slope, on the right hand side of this stream, about sixty bell tents were pitched, the arms all ranged on the grass; before the tents, poles with little streamers flying here and there; groups of men leading their horses to water, others filling kettles and black pots, some cooking under the hedges; the various uniforms looked pretty; Highlanders gathering blackberries. My father took us to the tent of Lord Henry Seymour, who is an old friend of his; he breakfasted here to-day, and his plain English civility, and quiet good sense, was a fine contrast to the mob, &c. Dapple,[1] your old acquaintance, did not like all the sights at the camp as well as I did."

"*Oct.* 3, '98.

"My father went to Dublin the day before yesterday, to see Lord Cornwallis about the Court of Enquiry on the sergeant who harangued the mob. About one o'clock to-day Lovell returned from the Assizes at Longford with the news, met on the road, that expresses had come an hour before from Granard to Longford, for the Reay Fencibles, and all the troops; that there was another *rising* and an attack upon Granard: four thousand men the first report said, seven hundred the second. What the truth may be it is impossible to tell, it is certain that the troops are gone to Granard, and it is yet more certain that all the windows in this house are built halfway up, guns and bayonets dispersed by Captain Lovell in every room. The yeomanry corps paraded to-day, all steady: guard sitting up in house and in the town to-night."

[1] Maria's horse.

"*Thursday Morning.*

"All alive and well. A letter from my father: stays to see Lord Cornwallis on Friday. Deficient arms for corps given by Lord Castlereagh."

The sergeant was to have been tried at the next sessions, but he was by this time ashamed and penitent, and Mr. Edgeworth did not press the trial, but knowing the man was, among his other weaknesses, very much afraid of ghosts, he said to him as he came out of the Court-House, "I believe, after all, you had rather see me alive than have my ghost haunting you!"

To Miss Sophy Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Nov.* 19, '98.

"My dear Sophy,

"You have, I suppose, or are conscious that you ought to have, whitlows upon your thumb and all your four fingers for not writing to me! Tell me what you are saying and doing, and above all where you are going. My father has taken me into a new partnership —we are writing a comedy: will you come and see it acted? He is making a charming theatre in the room over his study: it will be twice as large as old Poz's little theatre in the dining-room. My aunt's woollen wig for old Poz is in high estimation in the memory of man, woman, and child here. I give you the play-bill:

Mrs. Fangle (a rich and whimsical widow)	Emmeline.
Caroline (a sprightly heiress) . .	Charlotte.

Jemima (Mrs. Fangle's waiting-maid) .	Bessy.
Sir Mordant Idem (in love with Mrs. Fangle, and elderly, and hating anything *new*)	Henry.
Opal (nephew to Sir Mordant, and hating everything *old*, in love with Caroline, and wild for illuminatism) .	Sneyd.
Count Babelhausen (a German illuminatus, trying to marry either Mrs. Fangle or Caroline) . . .	Lovell.
Heliodorus and Christina (Mrs. Fangle's children, on whom she tries strange experiments)	William and Honora.

"To explain illuminatism I refer you to Robinson's book called 'Proofs of a Conspiracy.' It was from this book, which gives a history of the cheats of Freemasonry and Illuminatism, that we took the idea of Count Babelhausen. The book is tiresome, and no sufficient proofs given of the facts, but parts of it will probably interest you.

"Lovell has bought a fine apparatus and materials for a course of chemical lectures which he is going to give us. The study is to be the laboratory: I wish you were *in it*.

"In the 'Monthly Review' for October there is this anecdote. After the King of Denmark, who was somewhat silly, had left Paris, a Frenchman, who was in company with the Danish Ambassador, but did not know him, began to ridicule the King—'Ma foi! il a une tête! une tête—' 'Couronnée,' replied the Ambassador, with presence of mind and politeness. My father, who was much delighted with this answer, asked

Lovell, Henry, and Sneyd, without telling the right answer, what they would have said.

Lovell: 'A head—and a heart, sir.'
Henry: 'A head—upon his shoulders.'
Sneyd: 'A head—of a King.'

"Tell me which answer you like best. Richard will take your 'Practical Education' to you."

"Practical Education" was published this year, and was praised and abused enough to make the authors immediately famous.

The play mentioned in the foregoing letter was twice acted in January, 1799, with great applause, under the title of "Whim for Whim." Mr. Edgeworth's mechanism for the scenery, and for the experiments tried on the children, were most ingenious. I painted the scenery, and arranged the dresses. The piece was afterwards sent to Sheridan, but rejected: the subject was not considered of sufficient interest or comic enough for the stage.

The day after the last performance of "Whim for Whim," we went to Dublin for Mr. Edgeworth to attend Parliament, the last Irish Parliament, he having been returned for the borough of St. John's Town, in the County of Longford, and in the spring Maria and I accompanied him to England.

Maria to Miss Charlotte Sneyd.

"*Dublin, April* 2, 1799.

"My dear Aunt Charlotte,

"Here we are waiting for a wind, and likely to wait for some time according to Mr. Kirwan the

monarch of the clouds' prediction. In the paper of to-night you will see my father's farewell speech on the Education Bill.

"Some time ago, amongst some hints to the Chairman of the Committee of Education, you sent one which I have pursued: you said that the early lessons for the poor should speak with detestation of the spirit of revenge: I have just finished a little story called 'Forgive and Forget,' upon this idea. I am now writing one on a subject recommended to me by Dr. Beaufort, on the evils of procrastination; the title of it is 'By-and-Bye.'[1] I am very much obliged to Bessy and Charlotte for copying the Errata of 'Practical Education' for me, and should be *extremely* obliged to the whole Committee of Education and Criticism at Edgeworthstown, if they would send corrections to me from their own brains; the same eye (if I may judge by my own) can only see the same things in looking over the book twenty times. Tell Sneyd that there is a political print just come out, of a woman, meant for Hibernia, dressed in orange and green, and holding a pistol in her hand to oppose the Union."

Mrs. Edgeworth to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Richmond Place, Clifton,*
"*May* 26, '99.

"My dear Mrs. Ruxton,

"I am very much obliged to you for your letter and its contents, which were a letter from each of my brothers and a very merry one from Louisa. I shall owe you or your man a large sum of money for them,

[1] The title was afterwards changed to "To-morrow."

also for the parcel which you mention, which the Miss Sneyds have had the goodness to send me. You do not know, my dear sister, nor is it even in my power to make you acquainted with half, or one-tenth, of the generous kindness they have shown to me on every occasion.

"We are very well settled here, and this house is quite retired and quite quiet. The prospects are very beautiful, and we have charming green fields in which we walk, and in which dear Sophy could botanize at her ease.

"A young man, a Mr. Davy, at Dr. Beddoes', who has applied himself much to chemistry, has made some discoveries of importance, and enthusiastically expects wonders will be performed by the use of certain gases, which inebriate in the most delightful manner, having the oblivious effects of Lethe, and at the same time giving the rapturous sensations of the Nectar of the Gods! Pleasure even to madness is the consequence of this draught. But faith, great faith, is I believe necessary to produce any effect upon the drinkers, and I have seen some of the adventurous philosophers who sought in vain for satisfaction in the bag of *Gaseous Oxyd*, and found nothing but a sick stomach and a giddy head."

Our stay at Clifton was made very agreeable by the charm of Dr. and Mrs. Beddoes' society; her grace, genius, vivacity, and kindness, and his great abilities, knowledge, and benevolence, rendered their house extremely pleasant. We met at Clifton Mr. and Mrs. Barbauld. He was an amiable and benevolent man, so eager against the slave-trade, that when he drank

tea with us, he always brought some East India sugar, that he might not share our wickedness in eating that made by the negro slave. Mrs. Barbauld, whose "Evenings at Home" had so much delighted Maria and her father, was very pretty, and conversed with great ability in admirable language. At Clifton my youngest brother, a Lieutenant in the Navy, came to see us, and I had the great happiness to find that he was liked by Mr. Edgeworth, their tastes and pursuits and scientific knowledge agreed; and then began their high esteem for each other and intimate friendship, which continued all Mr. Edgeworth's lifetime.

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Clifton, June* 5, 1799.

"Good news, my dearest aunt, my mother is fast asleep: she has a fine little daughter, who has just finished eating a hearty supper. At nine minutes before six this evening, to my great joy, my little sister Fanny came into the world.

"We are impatient for dear Sophy's arrival. My father sends his kindest love to his dear sister, who from the day of the battle about the grenadier's cap to the present moment, has been always the sharer of his pains and pleasures. I said my mother was asleep, and though my father and I talk in our sleep, all people do not; if she did, I am sure she would say, 'Love to my Sister Ruxton, and my friend Letty.'"

Maria took her little sister to bring down to her father, but when she had descended a few steps a panic seized her, and she was afraid to go either backwards or

forwards. She sat down on the stairs, afraid she should drop the child, afraid that its head would come off, and afraid that her father would find her sitting there and laugh at her; till seeing the footman passing she called "Samuel" in a terrified voice, and made him walk before her backwards down the stairs till she safely reached the sitting-room.

We paid a visit to Mr. and Mrs. Keir, Mr. Edgeworth's old friends, and stayed some days in London. Johnson the bookseller was at this time in prison for a publication which was considered treasonable. All his literary friends made it a point to visit him in his adversity: Mr. Edgeworth and Maria went to see him in the King's Bench; she had a great regard for Johnson, though his dilatoriness tried her patience in all the business of printing and publishing her works; she thought him a generous, able, kind-hearted man, and an excellent critic. He had perceived the merit of Cowper's Poems, and had ventured to publish what several other booksellers had contemptuously rejected. His own taste was excellent, and his own disposition quiet and peaceable; but he became too much connected with Godwin and Holcroft, and it was afterwards a disadvantage to Maria that her works were published by the printer of what were considered seditious and sectarian books.

Mr. Edgeworth visited Dr. Darwin, but I was accidentally prevented from accompanying him, thus losing the opportunity of seeing this remarkable man: he died two years afterwards. Maria had been a good deal in his company with her father at different times, and thought him not only a first-rate genius, but one of the most benevolent, as well as wittiest of men. He stuttered, but far from this lessening the charm of his

conversation, Maria used to say that the hesitation and slowness with which his words came forth, added to the effect of his humour and shrewd good sense.

We returned home in September, 1799.

To Miss Ruxton.[1]

"*Edgeworthstown, Jan.* 29, 1800.

"My dear Letty,

"More precious to us than Arundelian marbles are letters from Arundel, and after an interval of almost three months dear Sophy's letter was most welcome. I have no complaints to make of you—*sorrow* bit of right have I to complain of you. Some time ago we took a walk to see the old castle of Cranalagh, from which in the last Rebellion (but one) Lady Edgeworth was turned out: part of it, just enough to swear by, remains to this day, and with a venerable wig of ivy at top cuts a very respectable figure; and moreover there are some of the finest laurels and hollies there that I ever saw, and as fine a smell of a pigsty as ever I smelt, and an arborvitæ-tree, of which I gathered a leaf, and thought that I and my gloves should never for the remainder of our lives get rid of the smell of bad apples, of which this same tree of life smells. But I have not yet come to the thing I was going to say about the castle of Cranalagh, *viz.*—for I love oldfashioned viz.—when we got near the ruined castle, out comes a barking dog, just such another as assailed us at the old castle near Black Castle, to which we walked full fifteen years ago; the first walk I ever took with Sophy, and how she got

[1] Mr. and Mrs. Ruxton, with their family, were at this time residing at Arundel, in Sussex.

home without her shoe, to this hour I cannot comprehend. It was this barking dog which brought you immediately to my mind, and if I have given you too much of it you must forgive me. Now we are upon the subject of old castles, do you remember my retailing to you, at second hand, a description of my father's visit to the Marquis de la Poype's old chateau in Dauphiny, with the cavern of bats and stalactites? A little while ago my father received a letter in a strange hand, which I copy for my aunt and you, as I think it will please you as it did us, to see that this old friend of my father's remembers him with so much kindness through all the changes and chances that have happened in France. The letter is from the Marquis de la Poype, who addressed it to the Abbé Edgeworth, in hopes that the Abbé could transmit it to my father—the lines at the end are in the Abbé's own hand—the handwriting of so great and good a man is a curiosity.

"Before this reaches you my father will be in Dublin, he goes on Saturday next to the call of the House for the grand Union business. Tell my aunt that he means to speak on the subject on Monday. His sentiments are unchanged: that the Union would be advantageous to all the parties concerned, but that England has not any right to do to Ireland *good against her will.*

"Will you tell me what means you have of getting parcels from London to Arundel? because I wish to send to my aunt a few 'Popular Tales,' which I have finished, as they cannot be wanted for some months by Mr. Johnson. We have begged Johnson to send 'Castle Rackrent,'[1] I hope it has reached you: do not

[1] Published without the author's name in 1800.

mention to any one that it is ours. Have you seen 'Minor Morals,' by Mrs. Smith? There is in it a beautiful little botanical poem called the 'Calendar of Flora.'"

Interlined in red ink by R. L. E.

"Mr. Buckley, a friend of Dr. Beaufort's, sent to us a letter he got from Lord Nelson, promising to patronise Francis Beaufort, written very nicely with his left hand, and with the same noble simplicity which you must have admired in his public letters."

Maria to R. L. Edgeworth.

"*Edgeworthstown,* 1800.

"My dear Father,

"How glad I am that you have sent for the Report of the Commissioners of Education. It seems as if something *good* would be done. Unionists and anti-Unionists must all agree that the Education of the people *ought* to be improved, and who so fit to be at the head of such an undertaking as—&c., &c. Perhaps, however, I am as usual building, painting, and papering castles in the air.

"Thank you, my dear father and most kind partner, for your partiality for 'Simple Susan,' and for feeling for the loss of the mislaid volume in the midst of all your business. In the last 'Star' there is an advertisement of the thirty-ninth edition of 'Dyke's Spelling Book,' so that you see 'Dyke and Dilworth' do not yet 'droop their laurelled heads.'"[1]

[1] Quoted from a letter of Dr. Darwin's, in which he said that Mr. Edgeworth's Primer would supersede the common grammars and spelling books.

To Miss Sophy Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Oct.* 20, 1800.

"My dear Sophy,

"This morning dear Henry took leave of home, and set out for Edinburgh. 'God prosper him,' as I in the language of a fond old nurse, keep continually saying to myself.

"Mr. Chenevix, a famous chemist, was so good as to come here lately to see my father upon the faith of Mr. Kirwan's assurance that he would 'like Mr. Edgeworth.' I often wished for you, my dear Sophy, whilst this gentleman was here, because you would have been so much entertained with his conversation about bogs, and mines, and airs, and acids, &c., &c. His history of his imprisonment during the French Revolution in Paris, I found more to my taste. When he was thrown into prison he studied Chaptal and Lavoisier's Chemistry with all his might, and then represented himself as an English gentleman come over to study chemistry in France, and M. Chaptal got him released, and employed him, and he got acquainted with all the chemists and scientific men in France. Mr. Chenevix has taken a house in Brook Street, London, and turned the cellar into a laboratory; the people were much afraid to let it to him, they expected he would blow it up.

"About three weeks ago we went to Castle Saunderson, where we spent several most agreeable days. Mr. and Mrs. Saunderson spent a fortnight with us, and were very agreeable, but they have the misfortune to be both deaf."

"*Edgeworthstown, Dec.* 2, 1800.

"My mother has had a sore throat, and Aunt Charlotte and Honora have had feverish attacks, and John Jenkins has had fever, so that my father was obliged to remove him to his own house in the village. There has been and is a fever in the lanes of Edgeworthstown, and so quickly does ill news fly, that this got before us to Collon, to the Speaker's, where we were invited, and had actually set out last week to spend a few days there. When we got to Allenstown, we were told that a servant from the Speaker's had arrived with a letter, and had gone on to Edgeworthstown with it: we waited for his return with the letter, which was to forbid our going to Collon, as Mrs. Foster, widow of the Bishop, was there with her daughters, and was afraid of our bringing infection! We performed quarantine very pleasantly for a week at Allenstown. Mrs. Waller's inexhaustible fund of kindness and generosity is like Aboulcasin's treasure, it is not only inexhaustible, but take what you will from it it cannot be perceptibly diminished. Harriet Beaufort[1] is indeed a charming excellent girl; I love and esteem her more and more as I know her better: she has been at different times between three and four months in the house with us, and I have had full opportunities of seeing down to the kitchen, and up to the garret of her mind.

"You are so near Johnson, that you must of course know more of Maria's sublime works than Maria knows of them herself; and besides Lovell, who thinks of them ten times more than Johnson, has not let you

[1] My sister, who resided with our uncle, Mr. Waller, at Allenstown, in the county of Meath.

burst in ignorance. An octavo edition of 'Practical Education' is to come out at Christmas: we have seen a volume, which looks as well as can be expected. The two first parts of 'Early Lessons,' containing Harry and Lucy, two wee-wee volumes, have just come over to us. Frank and Rosamond will, I suppose, come after with all convenient speed. How 'Moral Tales' are arranged, or in what size they are to appear, I do not know, but I guess they will soon be published, because some weeks ago we received four engravings for frontispieces; they are beautifully engraved by Neagle, and do justice to the designs, two of which are by my mother, and two by Charlotte. I hope you will like them. There are three stories which will be new to you, 'The Knapsack,' 'The Prussian Vase,' and 'Angelina.'

"Now, my dear friend, you cannot say that I do not tell you what I am doing. My father is employed making out Charts of History and Chronology, such as are mentioned in 'Practical Education.' He has just finished a little volume containing Explanations of Poetry for children: it explains 'The Elegy in a Country Churchyard,' 'L'Allegro,' 'Il Penseroso,' and 'The Ode to Fear.' It will be a very useful schoolbook. It goes over to-night to Johnson, but how long it will remain with him before you see it in print I cannot divine."

"Belinda" was published in 1801. Maria was at Black Castle when the first copy reached her; she contrived before her aunt saw it, to tear out the title pages of the three volumes, and her aunt read it without the least suspicion of who was the author, and excessively entertained and delighted, she insisted on Maria's listening to passage after passage as she went on. Maria

affected to be deeply interested in some book she held in her hand, and when Mrs. Ruxton exclaimed, "Is not that admirably written?" Maria coldly replied, "Admirably read, I think." And then her aunt, as if she had said too much added, "It may not be so very good, but it shows just the sort of knowledge of high life which people have who live in the world." Then again and again she called upon Maria for her sympathy, till quite provoked at her faint acquiescence, she at last accused her of being envious: "I am sorry to see my little Maria unable to bear the praises of a rival author."

At this Maria burst into tears, and showing her aunt the title page she declared herself the author. But Mrs. Ruxton was not pleased—she never liked "Belinda" afterwards, and Maria had always a painful recollection of her aunt's suspecting her of the meanness of envy.

In 1801 a second edition of "Castle Rackrent" was published, "By Maria Edgeworth," as its success was so triumphant that some one—I heard his name at the time but do not now remember it, and it is better forgotten—not only asserted that he was the author, but actually took the trouble to copy out several pages with corrections and erasures, as if it was his original MS.!

The "Essay on Irish Bulls" was published in 1802, "By R. L. Edgeworth and Maria Edgeworth, author of 'Castle Rackrent.'" A gentleman, much interested in improving the breed of Irish cattle, sent, on seeing the advertisement, for this work on Irish Bulls; he was rather confounded by the appearance of the classical bull at the top of the first page, which I had designed from a gem, and when he began to read the book he threw it away in disgust: he had purchased it as Secretary to the Irish Agricultural Society.

To Miss Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Aug.* 1, 1802.

"You are a goose or a gosling, whichever you like best, for I perceive you are in great anxiety lest my poor little imagination should not have been completely set to rights. Now set your heart at ease, for I, putting my left hand upon my heart, because I could not conveniently put my right, which holds the pen, though I acknowledge that would be much more graceful, do hereby declare that I perfectly understood and understand the explanation contained in your last, and am fully satisfied, righted, and delighted therewith.

"This being the 1st of August, we may expect soon to see Richard Cœur de Lion coming over here in a barrister's wig, and whether with or without a wig we shall be most happy to see him. Do not fancy that I imagine barristers ride in their wigs, that was only a figure of speech.

"I have been much interested by the Letters from Lausanne, I think them in some parts highly pathetic and eloquent, but as to the moral tendency of the book I cannot find it out, turn it which way I will. I think the author wrote merely with the intention of showing how well he could paint passion, and he has succeeded. The Savage of Aveyron[1] is a thousand times more interesting to me than Caliste. I have not read anything for years that interested me so much. Mr. Chenevix will be here in a few days, when we will crossquestion

[1] A little history of a boy found in France, "a wild man of the woods." He was brought to Paris, and the philosophers disputed much on his mental powers; but he died before they came to any conclusion.

him about this savage, upon whom the eyes of civilised Europe have been fixed. Mr. Chenevix and his sister, Mrs. Tuite, and with them Mrs. Jephson, spent a day here last week: she is clever and agreeable. What did you think of M. Pictet's account of Edgeworthstown?"

M. Pictet, of Geneva, paid us a visit this summer, coming over from Mr. Tuite's, of Sonna, where he was staying with Mr. Chenevix, and his account of the society at Paris induced Mr. Edgeworth to determine on going there. He, Maria, Emmeline, Charlotte and I set out in the middle of September from Edgeworthstown. Emmeline left us at Conway, and went to stay with Mrs. Beddoes at Clifton, where she was married to Mr. King (or Konig, a native of Berne,) a most distinguished surgeon.

In London Mr. Edgeworth purchased a roomy coach, in which we travelled very comfortably.

Maria to Miss Sophy Ruxton.

"*Loughborough, Sept.* 25, 1802.

"I calculate, my dear Sophy, that you have accused me at least a hundred times of being lazy and good-for-nothing, because I have not written since we left Dublin; but do not be angry, I was not well during the time we were in Dublin, nor for two or three days after we landed: but three days' rest at Bangor Ferry recovered me completely, and thanks to Dr. Diet, Dr. Quiet, and Dr. Merryman, I am now in perfectly good plight.

"To take up things at the beginning. We had a tedious passage, but Charlotte and I sat upon deck, and were well enough to be much amused with all the manœuvring of the sails, &c. The light reflected upon the waters from the light-house contracted instead

of diverging: I mention this, because there was an argument held upon the subject either at Black Castle or at Collon. As we were all sitting upon deck drinking tea in the morning, a large, very large, woman who was reading opposite to us, fell from her seat with a terrible noise. We all thought she had fallen down dead: the gentlemen gathered round her, and when she was lifted up, she was a shocking spectacle, her face covered with blood, she had fallen upon one of the large nails in the deck. She recovered her senses, but when she was carried down to the cabin she fainted again, and remained two hours senseless. 'She has a mother, ma'am,' said the steward, 'who is lying a-dying at Holyhead, and she frets greatly for her.' We were told afterwards that this lady has for twenty years crossed the sea annually to visit her mother, though she never could make the passage without swooning. She was a coarse house-keeper looking woman, without any pretence to sentimentality, but I think she showed more affection and real heroism than many who have been immortalized by the pen or pencil.

"Nothing new or entertaining from Holyhead to Bangor. A delightful day at Bangor, pleasant walk: Charlotte drew some Welsh peasants and children: we tried to talk to them, but *Dumsarzna,* or words to that effect, 'I don't understand English,' was the constant answer, and the few who could speak English seemed to have no wish to enter into conversation with us: the farmers entrenched themselves in their houses and shut their doors as fast as they could when we approached. From Bangor Ferry we took a pleasant excursion to Carnarvon—do not be afraid, I shall not give you a long description of the castle—I know you have seen it, but I wish I knew whether you and I saw

it with the same ideas. I could not have conceived that any building or ruin could have appeared to me so sublime. The amazing size! the distinctness of the parts! the simplicity of the design, the thickness of the walls, the air of grandeur even in decay! In the courtyard of the castle an old horse and three cows were grazing, and beneath the cornices on the walls two goats, half black half white, were browsing. I believe that old castles interest one by calling up ideas of past times, which are in such strong contrast with the present. In the courtyard of this castle were brewing vessels in vaults which had formerly perhaps been dungeons, and pitched sails stretched upon the walls to dry: the spirit of old romance and modern manufactures do not agree.

"Mr. Waitman, the landlord of the Carnarvon Hotel, accompanied us to the Castle, and he was indeed a glorious contrast to the enthusiastic old man who showed the ruins. This old man's eyes brightened when he talked of the Eagle Tower, and he seemed to forget that he had a terrible asthma whilst he climbed the flights of stone stairs. Our landlord, a thorough Englishman in shrewd, wilful independence, entertained my father by his character and conversation, and pleased him by his praises of Lovell, of whom he spoke with much gratitude. We returned at night to Bangor Ferry. Early next morning my father and mother, on two Welsh ponies, trotted off to see Lord Penrhyn's slate quarries. We had orders to follow them in a few hours. In the meantime who do you think arrived? Mr. and Mrs. Saunderson, with all their children. They seemed as glad to see me as I was to see them. They had intended to go another road, but went on to

Conway on purpose to spend the day with us. A most pleasant day we did spend with them. They were going to Bristol to see their son, and when they found that Emmeline was going there, they offered in the kindest and most polite manner to take her with them. We parted with Emmeline and with them the next morning; they went to Keniogy, which I can't spell, and we went to Holywell, and saw the copper works, a vast manufactory, in which there seemed to be no one at work. We heard and saw large wheels turning without any visible cause, 'instinct with spirit all.' At first nothing but the sound of dripping water, then a robin began to sing amongst the rafters of the high and strange roof. The manufactory in which the men were at work was a strong contrast to this desolate place, a stunning noise, Cyclops with bared arms dragging sheets of red-hot copper, and thrusting it between the cylinders to flatten it; while it passed between these, the flame issued forth with a sort of screeching noise. When I first heard it I thought somebody was hurt: the flame was occasioned by the burning of the grease put between the rollers. There were a number of children employed drawing straight lines on the sheets of copper, ready for a man with a large pair of shears to cut. The whole process was simple.

"Saw the famous well, in which the spring supplies a hundred tuns a minute. Went on to Chester and Newcastle, in hopes of finding Jos. Wedgewood at Etruria: were told he was not in the country, but just as our chaise whips up, Papa espied Wedgewood's partner, who told him Jos. *was* at Etruria: came last night, would stay but one day. Went to Etruria, Jos. received us as you would expect, and

all the time I was with him I had full in my recollection the handsome manner in which you told me he spoke of my father. The mansion-house at Etruria is excellent; but alas! the Wedgewoods have bought an estate in Dorsetshire, and are going to leave Etruria. I do not mean that they have given up their share in the manufactory. Saw a flint mill worked by a steam-engine just finished, cannot stay to describe it—for two reasons, because I cannot describe it intelligibly, and because I want to get on to the Priory to Mrs. and the Miss Darwins. Poor Doctor Darwin![1] It was melancholy to go to that house to which, in the last lines he ever wrote, he had invited us. The servants in deep mourning: Mrs. Darwin and her beautiful daughters in deep mourning. She was much affected at seeing my father, and seemed to regret her husband as such a husband ought to be regretted. I liked her exceedingly; there was so much heart, and so little constraint or affectation in all she said and did, or looked. There was a charming picture of Doctor Darwin in the room, in which his generous soul appeared and his penetrating benevolent genius. How unlike the wretched misanthropic print we have seen! While I am writing this at Loughborough, my father is a few miles off at Castle Donnington. I forgot to tell you that we spent a delightful day, or remnant of a day, on our return from the Priory, at Mr. Strutt's."

Maria to Miss Sneyd.

"*London, Nerot's Hotel, Sept.* 27, 1802.

"We have been here about an hour, and next to the pleasure of washing face and hands, which were all

[1] Dr. Darwin died in April, 1802.

covered with red Woburn sand and Dunstable chalk, and London dust, comes the pleasure of writing to you, my dear good Aunt Mary. How glad I should be to give you any proof of gratitude for the many large and little kindnesses you have shown to me. There is no one in the world who can deserve to be thought of more at all times, and in all situations, than you; for there is no one thinks so much of others. As long as there is any one worth your loving upon earth, you cannot be unhappy. I think you would have been very apt to make the speech attributed to St. Theresa: 'Le pauvre Diable! comme je le plains! Il ne peut rien aimer. Ah! qu'il doit être malheureux!'

"But whilst I am talking sentiment you may be impatient for news. The first and best news is, that my father is extremely well. Travelling, he says, has done him a vast deal of good, and whoever looks at him believes him. It would be well for all faces if they had that effect on the spectators, or rather perhaps it would be ill for the credulous spectators. Isabella of Aragon, *or* Lord Chesterfield, or both, call a good countenance the best letter of recommendation. Whenever Nature gives false letters of recommendation, she swindles in the most abominable manner. Where she refuses them where they are best deserved, she only gives additional motive for exertion (vide Socrates or his bust[1] washed by M. E.) And after all, Nature is forced out of her letters of recommendation sooner or later. You know that it is said by Lavater, that the *muscles* of Socrates' countenance are beautiful, and these became so by the play given to them by the good passions, &c.,

[1] An alabaster bust of Socrates, which stood on the chimney-piece in the drawing-room at Black Castle.

&c., &c. And to be sure, Lavater, thou reasonest well, or Lord Selkirk would never have *pushy*ed the bust of Socrates with such enthusiastic delight. I hope my dear little *pushy* Fanny, whom I love better than all the busts in Christendom, is well and good.

"Charlotte tells me she carried you in her last as far as Loughborough and Castle Donnington, will you be so good to go on to Leicester with me? But before we set out for Leicester, I should like to take you to Castle Donnington, 'the magnificent seat of the Earl of Moira.' But then how can I do that, when I did not go there myself? Oh! I can describe after a description as well as my betters have done before me in prose and verse, and a description of my father's is better than the reality seen with my own eyes. The first approach to Donnington disappointed him; he looked round and saw neither castle, nor park, nor anything to admire till he came to the top of a hill, when in the valley below suddenly appeared the turrets of a castle, surpassing all he had conceived of light and magnificent in architecture: a real castle! not a modern, bungling imitation. The inside was suitable in grandeur to the outside; hall, staircase, antechambers; the library fitted up entirely with books in plain handsome mahogany bookcases, not a frippery ornament, everything grand, but not gaudy; marble tables, books upon the tables; nothing littered, but sufficient signs of living and occupied beings. At the upper end of the room sat two ladies copying music: a gentleman walking about with a book in his hand: neither Lord Moira nor Lady Charlotte Rawdon in the room. The gentleman, Mr. Sedley, not having an instinct like Mademoiselle Panache for a gentleman, did not, till Lord Moira en-

tered the room and received my father with open arms, feel sure that he was worthy of more than monosyllable civility. Lord Moira took the utmost pains to show my father that he was pleased with his visit, said he must have the pleasure of showing him over the house himself, and finished by giving him a letter to the Princess Joseph de Monaco, who is now at Paris. She was Mrs. Doyle. He also sent to Mrs. Edgeworth the very finest grapes I ever beheld. I wished the moment I saw them, my dear aunt, that you had a bunch of them.

"We proceeded to Leicester. Handsome town, good shops: walked whilst dinner was getting ready to a circulating library. My father asked for 'Belinda,' 'Bulls,' &c., found they were in good repute—'Castle Rackrent' in better—the others often borrowed, but 'Castle Rackrent' often bought. The bookseller, an open-hearted man, begged us to look at a book of poems just published by a Leicester lady, a Miss Watts. I recollected to have seen some years ago a specimen of this lady's proposed translation of Tasso, which my father had highly admired. He told the bookseller that we would pay our respects to Miss Watts, if it would be agreeable to her. When we had dined, we set out with our enthusiastic bookseller. We were shown by the light of a lanthorn along a very narrow passage between high walls, to the door of a decent-looking house: a maid-servant, candle in hand, received us. 'Be pleased, ladies, to walk up stairs.' A neatish room, nothing extraordinary in it except the inhabitants. Mrs. Watts, a tall, black-eyed, prim, dragon-looking woman in the background. Miss Watts, a tall young lady in white, fresh colour, fair thin oval face, rather

pretty. The moment Mrs. Edgeworth entered, Miss Watts, mistaking her for the authoress, darted forward with arms, long thin arms, outstretched to their utmost swing, 'Oh, WHAT AN HONOUR THIS IS!' each word and syllable rising in tone till the last reached a scream. Instead of embracing my mother, as her first action threatened, she started back to the furthest end of the room, which was not light enough to show her attitude distinctly, but it seemed to be intended to express the receding of awe-struck admiration—stopped by the wall. Charlotte and I passed by unnoticed, and seated ourselves by the old lady's desire: she after many twistings of her wrists, elbows, and neck, all of which appeared to be dislocated, fixed herself in her arm-chair, resting her hands on the black mahogany *splayed* elbows. Her person was no sooner at rest than her eyes and all her features began to move in all directions. She looked like a nervous and suspicious person electrified. She seemed to be the acting partner in this house to watch over her treasure of a daughter, to supply her with worldly wisdom, to look upon her as a phœnix, and—scold her. Miss Watts was all ecstasy and lifting up of hands and eyes, speaking always in that loud, shrill, theatrical tone with which a puppet-master supplies his puppets. I all the time sat like a mouse. My father asked, 'Which of those ladies, madam, do you think is your sister authoress?' 'I am no physiognomist'—in a screech—'but I do imagine that to be the lady,' bowing as she sat almost to the ground, and pointing to Mrs. Edgeworth. 'No, guess again.' 'Then that must be *she*,' bowing to Charlotte. 'No.' 'Then this lady,' looking forward to see what sort of an animal I was, for she had never seen me till this instant. To

make me some amends, she now drew her chair close to me, and began to pour forth praises: 'Lady Delacour, O! Letters for Literary Ladies, O!'

"Now for the pathetic part. This poor girl sold a novel in four volumes for ten guineas to Lane. My father is afraid, though she has considerable talents, to recommend her to Johnson, lest she should not *answer*. Poor girl, what a pity she had no friend to direct her talents; how much she made me feel the value of mine!"

Mrs. Edgeworth to Mrs. C. Sneyd.

"*Calais, Oct.* 5, 1802.

"My dear Madam,

"We landed here yesterday evening, after a very rough passage of three hours and a half. We leave this town to-morrow, and mean to go to Dunkirk and Brussels."

Maria to Miss Sophy Ruxton.

"*Brussels, Oct.* 15, 1802.

"After admiring on the ramparts of Calais the Poissardes with their picturesque nets, ugly faces, and beautiful legs, we set out for Gravelines, with whips clacking in a manner which you certainly cannot forget. The stillness and desolation of Gravelines was like the city in the Arabian Tales, where every one is turned into stone. Fortifications constructed by the famous Vauban, lunes, and demilunes, and curtains, all which did not prevent the French from trotting through it.

"We left Gravelines with an equipage at which So-

briety herself could not have forborne to laugh: to our London coach were fastened by long rope traces, six Flemish horses of different heights, but each large and clumsy enough to draw an English waggon. The nose of the foremost horse was thirty-five feet from the body of the coach, their hoofs all shaggy, their manes all uncombed, and their tails long enough to please Sir Charles Grandison himself. These beasts were totally disencumbered of every sort of harness except one strap which fastened the saddle on their backs; and high, high upon their backs, sat perfectly perpendicular, long-waisted postillions in jack-boots, with pipes in their mouths. The country appeared one vast flat common, without hedges, or ditches, or trees, tiled farm-houses of equal size and similar form at even distances. All that the power of monotony can do to put a traveller to sleep, is here tried; but the rattling and jolting on the paved roads set Morpheus and monotony both at defiance. To comfort ourselves we had a most entertaining 'Voyage dans les Pays Bas par M. Breton' to read, and the charming story of Mademoiselle de Clermont in Madame de Genlis' Petits Romans. I never read a more pathetic and finely written tale.

"Dunkirk is an ugly, bustling town. Strange-looking *charettes*, driven by thin men in cocked hats,—the window-shutters turned out to the streets and painted by way of signs with various commodities. A variety of things, among them little shifts, petticoats, and corsets were fairly spread upon the ground on the bridges and in the streets. The famous basin, about which there have been such disputes, is little worth. Voltaire wonders at the English and French waging war 'for a few acres of snow;' he might with equal

propriety have laughed at them for fighting about a *slop-basin*. The pont-tournant is well worth seeing, and for those who have strong legs and who have breakfasted, it is worth while to climb the two hundred and sixty-four steps of the tower. Whilst we were climbing the town clock struck, and the whole tower vibrated, and the vibration communicated itself to our ears and heads in a most sublime and disagreeable manner.

"At Dunkirk we entered what was formerly called L'ancien Brabant, and all things and all persons began to look like Dutch prints and Dutch toys, especially the women with their drop earrings, and their necklaces like the labels of decanters, their long-waisted, long-flapped jackets of one colour, and stiff petticoats of another. Even when moving the people all looked like wooden toys set in motion by strings—the strings in Flanders must be of gold: the Flemings seem to be all a money-making, money-loving people: they are fast recovering their activity after the Revolution.

"The road to Bruges, fifty feet broad, solidly paved in the middle, seems, like all French and Flemish roads, to have been laid out by some inflexible mathematician: they are always right lines, the shortest possible between two points. The rows of trees on each side of these never-ending avenues are of the ugliest sort and figure possible: tall poplars stripped almost to the top, as you would strip a pen, and pollarded willows: the giant poplar and the dwarf willow placed side by side alternately, knight and squire. The postillions have badges like the badges of charity schools, strapped round their arms, these are numbered and registered, and if they behave ill, a complaint may be lodged against them by merely writing their names on the register,

which excludes them from a pension, to which they would be entitled if they behaved well for a certain number of years. The post-houses are often lone, wretched places, one into which I peeped, a *grenier*, like that described by Smollett, in which the murdered body is concealed. At another post-house we met with a woman calling herself a *servante*, to whom we took not only an aversion, but a horror; Charlotte said that she should be afraid, not of that woman's cutting her throat, but that she would take a mallet and strike her head flat at one blow. Do you remember the woman in 'Caleb Williams,' when he wakens and sees her standing over him with an uplifted hatchet? Our *servante* might have stood for this picture.

"Bruges is a very old, desolate-looking town, which seems to have felt in common with its fellow towns the effects of the Revolution. As we were charged very high at the Hotel d'Angleterre, at Dunkirk, my father determined to go to the Hotel de Commerce at Bruges, an old strange house which had been a monastery: the man-chambermaid led us through gallery after gallery, up stairs and down stairs, turning all manner of ways, with a bunch of keys in his hand, each key ticketed with a pewter ticket. There were twenty-eight bed-chambers: thank heaven we did not see them all! I never shall forget the feeling I had when the door of the room was thrown open in which we were to sleep. It was so large and so dark, that I could scarcely see the low bed in a recess in the wall, covered with a dark brown quilt. I am sure Mrs. Radcliffe might have kept her heroine wandering about this room for six good pages. When we meet I will tell Margaret of the night Charlotte and I spent in this room, and the footsteps we heard

overhead—just a room and just a night to suit her taste.

"In the morning we went to see the Central School; it is in what was an old monastery, and the church belonging to it is filled with pictures collected from all the suppressed convents, monasteries, and churches. Buonaparte has lately restored some of their pictures to the churches, but those by Rubens and Raphael are at Paris. In the cabinet of natural history there is the skeleton and the skin of a man who was guillotined, as fine white leather as ever you saw. The preparations for these Ecoles Centrales are all too vast and ostentatious: the people are just beginning to send their children to them. Government finds them too expensive, and their number is to be diminished. The librarian of this Ecole Centrale at Bruges is an Englishman, or rather a Jamaica man, of the name of Edwards. Brian Edwards was his great friend, and he was well acquainted with Johnson the bookseller, and Dr. Aikin, and Mr. and Mrs. Barbauld. Mr. Edwards and his son had often met Lovell at Johnson's, and spoke of him quite with affection. The two sons spent the evening with us, and they and their father accompanied us next morning part of our way to Ghent. We went by the canal barque, as elegant as any pleasure-boat I ever was in. My father entertained the Edwards' with the history of his physiognomical guesses in a stage coach. The eldest son piques himself upon telling character from handwriting. He was positive that mine could not be the hand of a woman, and then he came off by saying it was the writing of a *manly* character! We had an extremely fine day, and the receding prospect of Bruges, with its mingled spires,

shipping, and windmills, the tops of their giant vanes moving above the trees, gave a pleasing example of a Flemish landscape, recalling the pictures of Teniers and the prints of Le Bas. We had good and agreeable company on board our barque, the Mayor of Bruges and his lady; her friend, a woman of good family; and an old Baron Triste, of a sixteen-quartering family. At the name of Mayor of Bruges, you probably represent to yourself a fat, heavy, formal, self-sufficient mortal—tout au contraire: our Mayor was a thin gentleman, of easy manners, literature, and amusing conversation: Madame, a beautiful Provinciale. M. Lerret, the Mayor, found us out to be the Edgeworths described by M. Pictet in the 'Journal Britannique.' Since we came to France we have found M. Pictet's account very useful, for at every public library, and in every Ecole Centrale, the 'Journal Britannique' is taken, and we have consequently received many civilities. It was Sunday, and when we arrived at Ghent, all the middling people of the town in their holiday clothes, were assembled on the banks of the canal according to custom to see the barque arrive: they made the scene very cheerful. The old Baron de Triste, though he had not dined, and though he had, as he said of himself, 'un faim de diable,' stayed to battle our coach and trunks through an army of custom-house officers. We stayed two days at Ghent, and saw pictures and churches without number. Here were some fine pictures by that Crayer of whom Rubens said, 'Crayer! personne ne te surpassera!' Do not be afraid, my dear Sophy, I am not going to overwhelm you with pictures, nor to talk of what I don't understand; but it is extremely agreeable to me to see paintings with those who have

excellent taste and no affectation. At the Ecole Centrale was a smart little librarian, to whom we were obliged for getting the doors of the cathedral opened to us *at night:* we went in by moonlight, the appearance was sublime; lights burning on the altar veiled from sight, and our own monstrous shadows cast on the pillars, added to the effect. The verger took one of the tall candles to light us to some monuments in white marble of exquisite sculpture. There were no pictures, but the walls were painted in the manner of the Speaker's room at the Temple, and by the master who taught De Gray. This kind of painting seems to suit churches, and to harmonize well with sculpture and statues.

"My dear friend, I have not room to say half I intended, but let me make what resolutions I please, I never can get all I want to say to you into a letter."

Maria to Miss Charlotte Sneyd.

"*Chantilly, Oct.* 29, 1802.

"My dear Aunt Charlotte,

"I last night sent a folio sheet to Sophy, giving the history of ourselves as far as Brussels, where we spent four days very much to our satisfaction: it is full of fine buildings, charming public walks, the country about it beautiful. In the Place Royale are two excellent hotels, Hotel d'Angleterre and Hotel de Flandres, to which we went, and found that Mr. Chenevix and Mr. Knox were in the other.

"My father thought it would be advantageous to us to see inferior pictures before seeing those of the best masters, that we might have some points of comparison; and upon the same principle we went to two provincial

theatres at Dunkirk and Brussels: but unluckily, I mean unluckily for our *principles,* we saw at Brussels two of the best Paris actors, M. and Madame Talma. The play was Racine's Andromaque (imitated in England as the Distressed Mother.) Madame Talma played Andromaque, and her husband Orestes: both exquisitely well. I had no idea of fine acting till I saw them, and my father, who had seen Garrick, and Mrs. Siddons, and Yates, and Le Kain, says he never saw anything superior to Madame Talma. We read the play in the morning, an excellent precaution, otherwise the novelty of the French mode of declamation would have set my comprehension at defiance. There was a ranting Hermione, who had a string too tight round her waist, which made her bosom heave like the bellows of a bagpipe whenever she worked with her clasped hands against her heart to pump out something like passion. There was also a wretched Pyrrhus, and an old Phœnix, whose grey wig I expected every moment to fall off.

"Next to this beautiful tragedy, the thing that interested and amused me most at Brussels, were the dogs: not lap-dogs, but the dogs that draw carts and heavy hampers. Every day I beheld numbers of these traineaux, often four, harnessed abreast, and driven like horses. I remember in particular seeing a man standing upright on one of these little carriages, and behind him two large hampers full of muscles, the whole drawn by four dogs. And another day I saw a boy of about ten years old driving four dogs harnessed to a little carriage; he crossed our carriage as we were going down a street called La Montagne de la Cour, without fearing our four Flemish horses. La Montagne de la Cour is a very grand name, and you may perhaps imagine that it

means a MOUNTAIN, but be it known to you, my dear aunt, that in Le Pays Bas, as well as in the County of Longford, they make mountains of molehills. The whole road from Calais to Ghent is as flat and as straight as the road to Longford. We never knew when we came to what the innkeeper and postillions call mountains, except by the postillions getting off their horses with great deliberation and making them go a snail's walk—a snail's gallop would be much too fast. Now it is no easy thing for a French postillion to walk himself when he is in his boots: these boots are each as large and as stiff as a wooden churn, and when the man in his boots attempts to walk, he is more helpless than a child in a go-cart: he waddles on, dragging his boots after him in a way that would make a pig laugh. As Lord Granard says 'a pig can whistle, though he has a bad mouth for it,'[1] I presume that *by a parity of reasoning* a pig may laugh. But I must not talk any more nonsense.

"We left Brussels last Sunday (you are looking in your pocket-book, dear Aunt Mary, for the day of the month; I see you looking.) The first place of any note we went to was Valenciennes, where we saw houses and churches in ruins, the effect of English wars and French revolutions. Though Valenciennès lace is very pretty we bought none, recollecting that though Coventry is famous for ribbons, and Tewkesbury for stockings, yet only the worst ribbons, and the worst stockings are to be had at Coventry and Tewkesbury. Besides we are not expert at counting Flemish money, which is quite

[1] A long argument on genius and education, between Lady Moira and Mr. Edgeworth, had been ended by Lord Granard wittily saying, "A pig may be made to whistle, but he has a bad mouth for it."

different from French, and puzzling enough to drive the seven sages of Greece mad. Even the natives cannot count it without rubbing their foreheads, and counting in their hands, and repeating 'c'a fait,' 'cela fait.' For my part I fairly gave the point up, and resolved to be cheated rather than go distracted. But indeed the Flemish are not cheats, as far as I have seen of them. They would go to the utmost borders of honesty for a couronne de Brabant, or a demi-couronne, or a double escalin, or a single escalin, or a plaquet, or a livre, or a sous, or a liard, or for any the vilest denomination of their absurd coin, yet I do not believe they would go beyond the bounds of honesty with any but an English Milor: they are privileged dupes. A maid at the hotel at Dunkirk said to me, 'Ah! Madame, nous autres nous aimons bien de voir rouler les Anglais.' Yes, because they think the English roll in gold.'

"Now we will go to Cambray, famous for its cambric and its Archbishop. Buonaparte had so much respect for the memory of Fenelon, that he fixed the seat of the present Archbishopric at Cambray instead of at Lille, as had been proposed. We saw Fenelon's head here, preserved in a church. But to return from Archbishops to cambrics. Our hostess at Cambray was a dealer in cambrics, and in her bale of *baptistes* she seemed literally to have her being. She was, in spite of cambric and Valenciennes lace—of which she had a dirty superfluity on her cap lined with pink—the very ugliest of the female species I had ever beheld. We were made amends for her by a most agreeable family who kept the inn at Roye: their ancestors had kept this inn for a hundred and fifty years; the present landlord and his wife are about sixty-eight and sixty, and their

daughter, about twenty, of a slight figure, vast vivacity in her mind and in all her motions; she does almost all the business of the house, and seems to love 'papa et maman' better than anything in the world, except talking. My father formed a hundred good wishes for her: first, when he heard her tell a story, she used such admirable variety of action, that he wished her on the stage: then when she waited at supper, with all the nimbleness and dexterity of a female harlequin, he wished that she was married to Jack Langan, that she might keep the new inn at Edgeworthstown: but his last and best wish for her was that she should be waiting-maid to you and Aunt Mary. He thought she would please you both particularly: for my part, I thought she would talk a great deal too much for you. However, her father and mother would not part with her for Pitt's diamond.

"We saw to-day the residence of the Prince de Condé, and of a long line of princes famous for virtue and talents—the celebrated palace of Chantilly, made still more interesting to us by having just read the beautiful tale by Madame de Genlis, 'Mademoiselle de Clermont;' it would delight my dear Aunt Mary, it is to be had in the first volume of the 'Petits Romans,' and those are to be found by Darcy, if he be not drunk, at Archer's, Dublin. After going for an hour and a half through thick, dark forest, in which Virginia might have lived secure from sight of mortal man, we came into open day and open country, and from the top of a hill beheld a mass of magnificent building, shaded by wood. I imagined this was the palace, but I was told that these buildings were only the stables of Chantilly. The Palace, alas! is no more! it was pulled down by

the Revolutionists. The stables were saved by a petition from the War Minister, stating that they would make stabling for troops, and to this use they are now applied. As we drove down the hill we saw the melancholy remains of the Palace: only the white arches on which it was built, covered with crumbled stone and mortar. We walked to look at the riding-house, built by the Prince de Condé, a princely edifice! Whilst we were looking at it, we heard a flute played near us, and we were told that the young man who played it was one of the poor Prince de Condé's chasseurs. The person who showed the ruins to us was a melancholy-looking man, who had been employed his whole life to show the gardens and Palace of Chantilly: he is about sixty, and had saved some hundred pounds in the Prince's service. He now shows their ruins, and tells where the Prince and Princess once slept, and where there *were* fine statues, and charming walks.

"We have had but one day's rain since we left you; if we had picked the weather we could not have had finer. The country through which we came from Brussels was for the most part beautiful, planted in side-scenes, after my father's manner, you know. The English who can see nothing worth seeing in this country, must certainly pass through it with huge blinkers of prejudice."

"*Paris, Wednesday.*

"We arrived about three o'clock, and are lodged for a few days at the Hotel de Courland. I forgot to tell you that we saw an officer with furred waistcoat, and furred pockets, and monstrous moustache; he looked altogether very like the Little Gibbon in Shaw's Zoo-

logy, only the Little Gibbon does not look as conceited as this man did.

"We are now, my dear Aunt Mary, in a magnificent hotel in the fine square, formerly Place Louis Quinze, afterwards Place de la Revolution, and now Place de la Concorde. Here the guillotine was once at work night and day; and here died Louis Seize, and Marie Antoinette, and Madame Roland: opposite to us is the Seine and *La Lanterne*. On one side of this square are the Champs Elysées."

Maria to Mrs. Mary Sneyd.

"*Paris, Rue de Lille, Oct.* 31, 1802.

"I left off at the Hotel de Courlande. We were told there was a fine view of Paris from the leads; and so indeed there is, and the first object that struck us was the Telegraph at work! The first voiture de remise (job-coach in plain English) into which we got, belonged to—whom do you think?—to the Princess Elizabeth. The Abbé Edgeworth had probably been in this very coach with her. The master of this house was one of the King's guards, a Swiss. Our apartments are all on one floor. The day after our arrival M. Delessert, he whom M. Pictet describes as a French Rumford, invited us to spend the evening with his mother and sister. We went: found an excellent house, a charming family, with whom we felt we were perfectly acquainted after we had been in the room with them for five minutes. Madame Delessert, the mother, an elderly lady of about sixty, has the species of politeness and conversation that my Aunt Ruxton has: I need not say how much I like her. Her daughter, Madame Gautier,

has fine large black eyes, very obliging and sensible, well dressed, not at all naked: people need not be naked here unless they choose it. Rousseau's Letters on Botany were written for this lady; he was a friend of the family. She has two fine children of eight and ten, to whose education she devotes her time and talents. Her second brother, François Delessert, about twenty, was educated chiefly by her, and does her great credit, and what is better for her, is extremely fond of her: he seems the darling of his mother, 'François mon fils' she calls him every minute. In his countenance and manners he is something like Henry; he has that sober kind of cheerfulness, that ingenuous openness, and that modest, gentlemanlike ease which pleases without effort, and without bustle. Madame Gautier does not live at Paris, but at a country house at Passy, the Richmond of Paris, about two miles out of town. She invited us to spend a day there, and a most pleasant day we passed. The situation beautiful, the house furnished with elegance and good sense, the society most agreeable. M. Delessert, père, an old sensible man, the rest of the family, and Madame de Pastoret, a literary and fashionable lady, with something of Mrs. Saunderson's best style of conversation: M. de Pastoret, her husband, a man of diplomatic knowledge; Lord Henry Petty, son of Lord Lansdowne, with whom my father had much conversation; the Swiss Ambassador, whose name I will not attempt to spell; M. Dumont, a Swiss gentleman, travelling with Lord Henry Petty, very sensible and entertaining, I am sorry that he has since left Paris; M. d'Etaing, of whom I know nothing; and last, but indeed not least, the Abbé Morellet, of whom you have heard my father speak. O! my dear Aunt Mary, how

you would love that man, and we need not be afraid of loving him, for he is near eighty. But it is impossible to believe that he is so old when one either hears him speak, or sees him move. He has all the vivacity, and feeling, and wit of youth, and all the gentleness that youth ought to have. His conversation is delightful, nothing too much or too little; sense, and gaiety, and learning, and reason, and that perfect knowledge of the world which mixes so well but so seldom with a knowledge of books. He invited us to breakfast, and this morning we spent with him. My dearest Aunt Mary, I do wish you had been with us; I know that you would have been so much pleased. The house so convenient, so comfortable, so many inventions the same as my father's. He has a sister living with him, Madame de Montigny, an amiable, sensible woman: her daughter was married to Marmontel, who died a few years ago: she alas! is not at Paris.

"My father did not present any of his letters of introduction till yesterday, because he wished that we should be masters and mistresses of our own time to see sights before we saw people. We have been to Versailles — melancholy magnificence — La petite Trianon: the poor Queen! and at the Louvre, or as it is now called, La Musée, to see the celebrated gallery of pictures. I was entertained, but tired with seeing so many pictures, all to be admired, and all in so bad a light, that my little neck was almost broken, and my little eyes almost strained out, trying to see them. We were all extremely interested yesterday seeing what are called Les Monumens Français—all the statues and monuments of the great men of France, arranged according to their dates in the apartments of the ancient

Monastery des Augustins. Here we saw old Hugh Capet, with his nose broken, and King Pepin, with his nose flattened by time, and Catherine de Medicis, in full dress, but not in full beauty, and Francis I., and dear Henry IV.

"We have been to the Théâtre Français and to the Théâtre Feydau, both fine houses: decorations, &c., superior to English: acting much superior in comedy; in tragedy they bully, and rant, and throw themselves into Academy attitudes too much.

"My father called on Mr. Merry, the Chargé d'Affaires (Lord Whitworth expected every day,) and he has called since I began this, and is now talking away."

R. L. Edgeworth to Miss Charlotte Sneyd.

"*Paris, Nov.* 18, 1802.

"Maria told you of M. and Madame de Pastoret; in the same house on another floor—for different families here have entire 'apartments,' you observe the word, in one house—we met M. and Madame Suard: he is accounted one of the most refined critics of Paris, and has for many years been at the head of newspapers of different denominations; at present he is at the head of 'La Publiciste.' He is prudent, highly informed, not only in books, but in the politics of different states and the characters of men in all the different countries of Europe. Madame Suard has the remains of much beauty, a belle esprit, and aims at singularity and independence of sentiment. Would you believe it, Mr. Day paid his court to her thirty years ago? She is very civil to us, and we go to their house once a week:

literati frequent it, and to each of them she has something to say.

"At Madame de Pastoret's we met M. Degerando and M. Camille Jordan. Not Camille de Jourdan, the assassin, nor Camille Desmoulins, another assassin, nor General Jourdan, another assassin, but a young man of agreeable manners, gentle disposition, and much information; he lives near Paris, with his Pylades Degerando, who is also a man of much information, married to a pretty sprightly domestic woman, who nurses her child in earnest. Camille Jordan has written an admirably eloquent pamphlet on the choice of Buonaparte as first consul for life; it was at first forbidden, but the Government wisely recollected that to forbid is to excite curiosity. We three have had profound metaphysical conferences in which we have avoided contest and have generally ended by being of the same opinion. We went, by appointment, to Madame Campan's; she keeps the greatest boarding-school in France, to meet Madame Recamier, the beautiful lady who had been nearly squeezed to death in London. How we liked the school and its conductress, who professes to follow Practical Education, I leave to Maria to tell you. How we like Madame Recamier is easily told; she is certainly handsome, but there is nothing noble in her appearance; she was very civil. M. de Prony, who is at the head of the Engineers des Ponts et Chaussées—civil engineers—was introduced to us by Mr. Watt. I forgot to speak of him; he has just left Paris. M. de Prony showed us models and machines which would have delighted William. M. L'Abbé Morellet's niece next engaged our attention; she and her husband came many leagues to see us; and we met also Madame de Vergennes,

Madame Remusat, and Madame Nansoutit, all people of knowledge and charming manners. Madame Lavoisier and the Countess Massulski, General Kosciusko, Prince Jablounski, and Princess Jablounska, and two other Princesses, I leave to Maria. Mons. Edelcrantz, private secretary to the King of Sweden; Mons. Eisenman, a German; Mons. Geofrat, the guardian from Egypt of the Kings of Chaldea and seven Ibises; Mons. de Montmorenci—that great name: the Abbé Sicard, who dines here to-morrow; Mons. Pang, Mons. Bertrant, Mons. Milan, Mons. Dupont, Mons. Bareuil the illuminati man, and Mr. Bilsbury, I leave to her and Charlotte."

To William.

"Dear William,

"I am extremely pleased to hear that you are good; it shows a generous temper to be gentle when you are under the care of those who cannot compel you by force."

Mrs. Edgeworth to Miss Sneyd.

"*Paris, Nov.* 21, 1802.

"Mr. Edgeworth's summary of events closed, I believe, to Miss Charlotte Sneyd last Thursday. Friday we saw beauty, riches, fashion, luxury, and numbers at Madame Recamier's; she is a charming woman, surrounded by a group of adorers and flatterers in a room where are united wealth and taste, all of modern execution and ancient design that can contribute to its ornament—a strange *melange* of merchants and poets, philosophers and parvenus—English, French, Portuguese, and Brazilian, which formed the company; we were

treated with distinguished politeness by our hostess, who concluded the evening by taking us to her box at the Opera, where, besides being in company with the most fashionable women in Paris, *we were seen* by Buonaparte himself, who sat opposite to us in a railed box, through which he could see, but not be seen.

"Saturday we saw the magnificent Salle of the Corps Legislatif, and in the evening passed some hours in the agreeable society of Madame de Vergennes and her daughters. Sunday we were very happy at home. Monday morning, just as we were going out, M. Pictet was announced, we neither heard his name nor distinctly recollected his looks, he is grown so fat and looks so well, more friendly no man can be. I hope he perceives we are grateful to him. The remainder of that day was spent in the gallery of pictures, where we met Mr. Rogers, the poet, and Mr. Abercrombie, who informed Maria that he was the man who carried to Ireland a letter from Miss Emma Sneyd about strawberry plants. The evening was spent with M. Pictet at his sister's, an agreeable, well informed widow, with three handsome daughters. Tuesday we went to the National Library, where we were shown a large number of the finest cameos, intaglios, and Roman and Greek medals, and many of the antiquities brought from Egypt; and in the evening we had again the pleasure of M. Pictet's company, and of the charming Madame de Pastoret, who was so obliging as to drink tea with us. Yesterday we had the pleasure of being at home, when several learned and ingenious men called on us, and consequently heard one of the most lively and instructive conversations on a variety of topics for three hours: as I think it is Mr. Edgeworth's plan to knock you down

with names, I will just enumerate those of our visitors, Edelcrantz, a Swede, Molard, Eisenman, Dupont, and Pictet the younger. After they went, we paid a short visit to the pictures and saw the Salle du Tribunat and the Consul's apartments at the Tuileries: on the dressing table there were the busts of Fox and Nelson. At our return home we saw the good François Delessert and another man, who was the man who took Robespierre prisoner, and who has since made a clock which is wound up by the action of the air on mercury, like that which Mr. Edgeworth invented for the king of Spain. He told us many things that made us stare, and many that made us shiver, and many more that made us never wish to see him again.

"In the evening we went to Madame Suard's. Don't imagine that these ladies are all widows, for they have husbands, and in many instances the husband vaut mieux que la femme. At Madame Suard's we met the famous Count Lally Tolendal and the Duc de Crillon. This morning Maria has gone with the Pictets to see the Abbé Sicard's deaf and dumb. Mr. Edgeworth stayed at home to make a model of little William's machine.

"Thank you once more for the good accounts you so kindly and constantly give of all our friends and children: I am very happy that no illness or accident has happened to disturb you in our absence.

"Mr. Edgeworth has not yet seen Buonaparte: he goes to-morrow to wait on Lord Whitworth as a preliminary step. It is a singular circumstance that Lord Whitworth, the new Ambassador, has brought to Paris the same horses, and the same wife, and lives in the same house as the last Ambassador did eleven years

ago: he has married the widow of the Duke of Dorset, who was here then.

"In England many are the tales of scandal that have been related of the Consul and all his family: I don't believe them. A lady told me it was 'vraiment extraordinaire qu'un jeune homme comme lui ait de mœurs si exemplaires—et d'ailleurs on ne s'attend pas qu'un homme soit fidèle à une femme qui est plus agée que lui: mais si agée aussi! Il aime la soumission plus que la beauté: s'il lui dit de se coucher à huit heures, elle se couche: s'il faut se lever à deux heures, elle se leve! Elle est une bonne femme, elle a sauvé bien des vies.'

"Has Maria told you that she has had her 'Belinda' translated into French by the young Count de Segur, an amiable young man of one of the most ancient families of France, married to a granddaughter of the Chancellor D'Aguesseau? Many people support themselves by writing for journals, and by translating English books, yet the price of literature seems very low, and the price of all the necessaries of life very high. The influx of English has, they say, doubled the price of lodgings and of all luxuries.

"'Castle Rackrent' has been translated into German, and we saw in a French book an extract from it, giving the wake, the confinement of Lady Cathcart, and sweeping the stairs with the wig, as common and usual occurrences in that extraordinary kingdom!"

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Paris, Dec.* 1, 1802.

"I have been treasuring up for some time everything I have seen and heard which I think would interest

you; and now my little head is so full that I must empty it, or it would certainly burst. All that I have seen and heard has tended to attach me more firmly to you by the double effect of resemblance and of contrast. Every agreeable person recalls you; every disagreeable, makes me exclaim, how different, &c.

"I wish I could paint the different people we have seen in little William's magic lanthorn, and show them to you. At Madame Delessert's house there are, and have been for years, meetings of the most agreeable and select society in Paris: she has the courage absolutely to refuse to admit either man or woman of whose conduct she cannot approve; at other houses there is sometimes a strange mixture. To recommend Madame Delessert still more powerfully to you, I must tell you that she was the benefactress of Rousseau; he was, it is said, never good or happy except in her society: to her bounty he owed his retreat in Switzerland. She is nobly charitable, but if it were not for her friends no one would find out half the good she does. One of her acts of beneficence is recorded in Berquin's Ami des Enfans, but even her own children cannot tell in which story it is. Her daughter, Madame Gautier, gains upon our esteem every day.

"Turn the handle of the magic lanthorn: who is this graceful figure, with all the elegance of court manners, and all the simplicity of domestic virtue? She is Madame de Pastoret. She was chosen preceptress to the Princess in the ancien régime in opposition to the wife of Condorcet, and M. de Pastoret had I forget how many votes more than Condorcet when it was put to the vote who should be preceptor to the Dauphin at the beginning

of the Revolution. Both M. and Madame de Pastoret speak remarkably well, each with that species of eloquence which becomes them. He was President of the First Assembly, and at the head of the King's Council: the four other ministers of that council all perished! He escaped by his courage. As for her, the Marquis de Chastelleux's speech describes her: 'Elle n'a point d'expression sans grace et point de grace sans expression.'

"Turn the magic lanthorn. Here comes Madame Suard and Monsieur, a member of the Academy: very good company at their house. Among others Lally Tolendal, who is exceedingly like Father Tom, and whose real name of Mullalagh he softened into Lally, said to be more eloquent than any man in France; M. de Montmorenci, worthy of his great name.

"Push on the magic lanthorn slide. Here comes Boissy d'Anglas: a fine head! Such a head as you may imagine the man to have who by his single courage, restrained the fury of one of the National Assemblies when the head of one of the deputies was cut off and set on the table before him.

"Next comes Camille Jordan, with great eloquence of pen, not of tongue; and M. de Prony, a great mathematician, of whom you don't care to know more, but you would if you heard him.

"Who comes next? Madame Campan, mistress of the first boarding-school here, who educated Madame Louis Buonaparte, and who professes to keep her pupils entirely separate from servants, according to 'Practical Education,' and who paid us many compliments. Teaches drawing in a manner superior to anything I

had any idea of in English schools: she gave me a drawing in a gilt frame, which I shall show to you.[1] At Madame Campan's, as my father told you, we met the beautiful Madame Recamier, and at her dinner we met the most fashionable tragic and comic poet, and the richest man in Paris sat beside Charlotte. We went to the Opera with Madame Recamier, who produces a great sensation whenever she appears in public. She is certainly handsome, very handsome, but there is much of the magic of fashion in the enthusiasm she creates.

"There is a Russian Princess here, who is always carried in and out of her carriage by two giant footmen, and a Russian Prince, who is so rich that he is never able to spend his fortune, and asks advice how he shall do it. He never thinks, it seems, of *giving* it away.

"Who comes next? Kosciusko, cured of his wounds, simple in his manners, like all truly great men. We met him at the house of a Polish Countess, whose name I cannot spell.

"Who comes next? M. de Leuze, who translated the 'Botanic Garden,' as well as it could be translated into Fenelon prose; and M. and Madame de Vindé, who have a superb gallery of paintings, and the best concerts in Paris, and a library of eighteen thousand volumes well counted and well arranged; and what charms me more than either the books or the pictures, a little granddaughter of three years old, very like my sweet Fanny, with stockings exactly the same as those Aunt Mary knitted for her, and listing shoes precisely like what Fanny used to wear: she sat on my knee, and

[1] A pretty pencil drawing still in my possession.

caressed me with her soft, warm little hands, and looked at me with her smiling intelligent eyes.

"Dec. 3. Here I am at the brink of the last page, and I have said nothing of the Apollo, the Invalides, or Les Sourds et Muets. What shall I do? I cannot speak of everything at once, and when I speak to you so many things crowd upon my mind.

"Here, my dear Aunt, I was interrupted in a manner that will surprise you as much as it surprised me, by the coming in of Monsieur Edelcrantz, a Swedish gentleman, whom we have mentioned to you, of superior understanding and mild manners: he came to offer me his hand and heart!!

"My heart, you may suppose, cannot return his attachment, for I have seen but very little of him, and have not had time to have formed any judgment, except that I think nothing could tempt me to leave my own dear friends and my own country to live in Sweden.

"My dearest Aunt, I write to you the first moment, as next to my father and mother no person in the world feels so much interest in all that concerns me. I need not tell you that my father,

'Such in this moment as in all the past,'

is kindness itself; kindness far superior to what I deserve, but I am grateful for it."

Maria to Miss Sophy Ruxton.

"*Paris, Rue de Lille, No.* 525,
"*Dec.* 8, 1802.

"I take it for granted, my dear friend, that you have by this time seen a letter I wrote a few days ago to my

aunt. To you, as to her, every thought of my mind is open. I persist in refusing to leave my country and my friends to live at the Court of Stockholm, and he tells me (of course) that there is nothing he would not sacrifice for me except his duty: he has been all his life in the service of the King of Sweden, has places under him, and is actually employed in collecting information for a large political establishment. He thinks himself bound in honour to finish what he has begun. He says he should not fear the ridicule or blame that would be thrown upon him by his countrymen for quitting his country at his age, but that he should despise himself if he abandoned his duty for any passion. This is all very reasonable, but reasonable for him only, not for me; and I have never felt anything for him but esteem and gratitude."

Maria was mistaken as to her own feelings. She refused M. Edelcrantz, but she felt much more for him than esteem and admiration, she was exceedingly in love with him. Mr. Edgeworth left her to decide for herself; but she saw too plainly what it would be to us to lose her, and what she would feel at parting from us. She decided rightly for her own future happiness and for that of her family, but she suffered much at the time and long afterwards. While we were at Paris, I remember that in a shop where Charlotte and I were making some purchases, Maria sat apart absorbed in thought, and so deep in reverie, that when her father came in and stood opposite to her she did not see him till he spoke to her, when she started and burst into tears. She was grieved by his look of tender anxiety, and she afterwards exerted herself to join in society, and to take advantage

of all that was agreeable during our stay in France and on our journey home, but it was often a most painful effort to her. And even after her return to Edgeworthstown, it was long before she recovered the elasticity of her mind. She exerted all her powers of self-command, and turned her attention to everything which her father suggested for her to write. But "Leonora," which she began immediately after our return home, was written with the hope of pleasing the Chevalier Edelcrantz; it was written in a style which he liked, and the idea of what he would think of it was I believe present to her in every page she wrote. She never heard that he had even read it. From the time they parted at Paris there was no sort of communication between them, and beyond the chance which brought us sometimes into company with travellers who had been in Sweden, or the casual mention of M. Edelcrantz in the newspapers or scientific journals, we never heard more of one who had been of such supreme interest to her, and to us all at Paris, and of whom Maria continued to have all her life the most romantic recollection. I do not think she repented of her refusal, or regretted her decision; she was well aware that she could not have made him happy, that she would not have suited his position at the Court of Stockholm, and that her want of beauty might have diminished his attachment. It was better perhaps that she should think so, as it calmed her mind, but from what I saw of M. Edelcrantz I think he was a man capable of really valuing her. I believe that he was much attached to her, and deeply mortified at her refusal. He continued to reside in Sweden after the abdication of his master, and was always distinguished for his high character and great abilities. He never married.

He was, except very fine eyes, remarkably plain. Her father rallied Maria about her preference of so ugly a man; but she liked the expression of his countenance, the spirit and strength of his character, and his very able conversation. The unexpected mention of his name, or even that of Sweden, in a book or a newspaper, always moved her so much that the words and lines in the page became a mass of confusion before her eyes, and her voice lost all power.

I think it right to mention these facts, because I know that the lessons of self-command which she inculcates in her works were really acted upon in her own life, and that the resolution with which she devoted herself to her father and her family, and the industry with which she laboured at the writings which she thought were for the advantage of her fellow-creatures, were from the exertion of the highest principle. Her precepts were not the maxims of cold-hearted prudence, but the result of her own experience in strong and romantic feeling. By what accident it happened that she had, long before she ever saw the Chevalier Edelcrantz, chosen Sweden for the scene of "The Knapsack" I do not know, but I remember his expressing his admiration of that beautiful little piece, and his pleasure in the fine characters of the Swedish gentleman and peasants.

Miss Charlotte Edgeworth to Miss Charlotte Sneyd.

"*Rue de Lille, chez le Citoyen Verber,*
"*Dec.* 8, 1802.

"My dear Aunt Charlotte,

"One of the great objects of a visit to Paris, was, you know, to see Buonaparte; the review is, as you

see by the papers, over, and my father has not spoken to the great man—no, he did not wish it. All of our distant friends will be I am afraid disappointed, but some here think that my father's refusal to be presented to him shows a proper pride. All the reasons for this mode of conduct will serve perhaps for debate, certainly for conversation when we return.

"Madame Suard says that those societies are most agreeable where there are fewest women: if there were not women superior to her I should not hesitate to assent to her proposition, and I should with pleasure read Madame de Stael's book called 'Le Malheur d'être femme.' If on the contrary all women were Madame de Pastorets, or Madame Delesserts, or Madame Gautiers, I think I should take up the book with the intention not to be convinced.

"Some of the most horrible revolutionists were the most skilled in the sciences, and are held in the utmost detestation by numbers of sensible men who admire their ingenuity and talents. We saw one of these, a teacher at one of the chief Academies, and my father, who was standing near him, heard him, after having been talking on several most amusing and interesting subjects, give one of the deepest sighs he ever heard.

"The Abbé de Lille reads poetry particularly well, his own verses in a superior manner: we heard him, and were extremely pleased. He is very old, and so blind that his wife, whom he calls 'Mon Antigone,' is obliged to lead him.

"As you may suppose, we go as often as we can to the Gallery. I thank my dear Aunt Mary for thinking of the pleasure I should have in seeing the Venus de Medicis; she has not yet arrived, but I have seen the

Apollo, who did surprise me! On our way here we had seen many casts of him, and I have seen with you some prints: I could not have believed that there could have been so much difference between a copy and the original.

"10th. You see I am often interrupted. I will introduce you to our company last night at the Delesserts. All soirées here begin at nine o'clock.

"'Madame Edgeworth' is announced—room full without being crowded—enough light and warmth. M. Delessert, père, at a card-table with a gentleman who is a partner in his bank, and an elderly lady. There is a warm corner in the room, which is always large enough to contain Madame Delessert and two or three ladies and gentlemen. Madame Delessert advances to receive Madame Edgeworth, and invites her to sit beside her with many kind words and looks. Madame Gautier expresses her joy at seeing us. Now we are seated. M. Benjamin Delessert advances with his bow to the ladies. Madame Gautier, my father, and Maria, get together. M. Pictet, nephew to our dear Pictet, makes his bow and adds a few words to each. 'Mademoiselle Charlotte,' says Madame Delessert to me, 'I was just speaking of you.' I forget now what she had been saying, I have only the agreeable idea. Madame Grivel enters, a clever, good-natured little woman, wife to the partner who is at cards. Enter M. François Delessert and another gentleman. How the company divides and changes itself I am not at present supposed to know, for young M. Pictet has seated himself between my mother and me, and has a long conversation with me, in which Madame Grivel now and then joins: she is on the other side of me. Mademoiselle Lullin, our friend Pictet's sister,

and his and her virtues are discussed. Physics and metaphysics ensue; harmony, astonishing power of chords in music, glass broken by vibration, dreams, Spain, its manners and government. Young M. Pictet has been there: people there have little to do, because their wants are easily supplied.

"Here come tea and cakes, sweetmeats, grapes, cream, and all the goods of life. The lady who was playing at cards now came and sat beside me, amusing me for a long time with a conversation on—what do you think? Politics and the state of France! M. François repeats some good lines very well. Laughter and merriment. Now we are obliged to go, and with much sorrow we part.

"I see I never told you that we saw the Review, and we *saw* a man on a white horse ride down the ranks; we *saw* that he was a little man with a pale face, who seemed very attentive to what he was about, and this was all we *saw* of Buonaparte."

Maria to Miss Sophy Ruxton.

"*Paris, Dec.* 1802.

"I add to the list of remarkables and agreeables the Count and Countess de Segur, father and mother to our well-bred translator; she a beautiful grandmother, he a nobleman of the old school, who adds to agreeable manners a great deal of elegant literature. Malouet, the amiable and able councillor of the king, must also be added to your list: we met him yesterday, a fine countenance and simple manners; he conversed freely with my father, not at all afraid of *committing* himself. In general I do not see that prodigious fear of committing themselves, which makes the company of

some English men of letters and reputation irksome even to their admirers. Mr. Palmer, the great man of taste, who has lived for many years in Italy, is here, and is very much provoked that the French can now see all the pictures and statues he has been admiring, without stirring out of Paris. The Louvre is now so crowded with pictures, that many of them are seen to disadvantage. The Domenichino, my Aunt Ruxton's favourite, is not at present *visible*. Several of the finest pictures are, as they say, *sick*, and the physicians are busy restoring them to health and beauty. May they not mar instead of mending! A Raphael which has just come out of their hospital has the eyes of a very odd sort of modern blue. The Transfiguration is now in a state of convalescence, it has not yet made its appearance in public, but we were admitted into the sick room.

"Half Paris is now stark mad about a picture by Guerin of Phèdre and Hippolyte, which they actually think equal to Raphael.

"Of the public buildings Les Invalides appears to me the finest; here are all the flags and standards used in battle, or won from foreign nations,—a long-drawn aisle of glory that must create ambition in the rising generation of military in France. We saw here a little boy of nine years old with his tutor, looking at Turenne's monument, which has been placed with great taste, alone, with the single word TURENNE upon the sarcophagus. My father spoke to the little boy and his tutor, who told him he had come to look at a picture in which the heroic action of one of the boy's ancestors is pourtrayed. We went into the hospital library, and found a circle of old soldiers, sitting round a stove all reading most comfortably. It was a very pleasing and

touching sight. One who had lost both his hands, and who had iron hooks at the end of his wrists, was sitting at a table reading 'Télémaque' with great attention; he turned over the leaves with these hooks.

"My aunt asks me what I think of French society? All I have seen of it I like extremely, but we hear from all sides that we see only the best of Paris,—the men of literature and the ancienne noblesse. Les nouveaux riches are quite a different set. My father has seen something of them at Madame Tallien's (now Cabarus,) and was disgusted. Madame Recamier is of quite an opposite sort, though in the first fashion, a graceful and *decent* beauty of excellent character. Madame de Souza, the Portuguese Ambassadress, is a pretty and pleasing woman, authoress of 'Adèle de Senanges,' which she wrote in England. Her friends always proclaim her title as author before her other titles, and I thought her a pleasing woman before I was told that she had pronounced at Madame Lavoisier's an eloquent eulogium on 'Belinda.' I have never heard any person talk of dress or fashions since we came to Paris, and very little scandal. A scandalmonger would be starved here. The conversation frequently turns on the new petites pièces and little novels which come out every day, and are talked of for a few days with as much eagerness as a new fashion in other places. They also talk a vast deal about the little essays of criticism. In yesterday's 'Journal des Debats,' after a flaming panegyric on Buonaparte, 'Et après avoir parlé de l'univers de qui peut on parler? Des plus grandes des Poetes—de Racine:' then follows a criticism on Phèdre.

"We saw the grand Review the day before yesterday, from a window that looked out on the court of the

Louvre and Place de Carousal. Buonaparte rode down the lines on a fine white Spanish horse. Took off his hat to salute various generals, and gave us a full view of his pale, thin, woebegone countenance. He is very little, but much at ease on horseback: it is said he never appears to so much advantage as on horseback. There were about six thousand troops, a fine show, well appointed, and some, but not all, well mounted. On those who had distinguished themselves in the battle of Marengo, all eyes were fixed. While I was looking out of the window a gentleman came in who had passed many years in Spain: he began to talk to me about Madrid, and when he heard my name, he said a Spanish lady is translating 'Practical Education' from the French. She understands English, and he gave us her address that we may send a copy of the book to her.

"Mr. Knox, who was presented to Buonaparte, and who saw all the wonderful presentations, says that it was a huddled business, all the world received in a very small room. Buonaparte spoke more to officers than to any one else, affected to be gracious to the English. He said, 'L'Angleterre est une grande nation, *aussi bien* que la France, il faut que nous soyons amis!' Great men's words, like little men's dreams, are sometimes to be interpreted by the rule of contraries."

Maria to Miss Sneyd.

"*Paris, Jan.* 10, 1803.

"*Siècle réparateur*, as Monge has christened this century.

"My dear Aunt Mary,

"I will give you a journal of yesterday: I know you love journals. Got up and put on our shoes and

stockings and cambric muslin gowns, which are in high esteem here, fur-tippets, and *fur-clogs*,—God bless Aunt Mary and Aunt Charlotte for them,—and were in coach by nine o'clock, drove to the excellent Abbé Morellet's, where we were invited to breakfast to meet Madame d'Ouditot, the lady who inspired Rousseau with the idea of Julie. Julie is now seventy-two years of age, a thin woman in a little black bonnet: she appeared to me shockingly ugly, she squints so much that it is impossible to tell which way she is looking; but no sooner did I hear her speak, than I began to like her; and no sooner was I seated beside her, than I began to find in her countenance a most benevolent and agreeable expression. She entered into conversation immediately: her manner invited and could not fail to obtain confidence. She seems as gay and open-hearted as a girl of fifteen. It has been said of her that she not only never did any harm, but never suspected any. She is possessed of that art which Lord Kaimes said he would prefer to the finest gift from the queen of the fairies, —the art of seizing the best side of every object. She has had great misfortunes, but she has still retained the power of making herself and her friends happy. Even during the horrors of the Revolution, if she met with a flower, a butterfly, an agreeable smell, a pretty colour, she would turn her attention to these, and for the moment suspend her sense of misery, not from frivolity, but from real philosophy. No one has exerted themselves with more energy in the service of her friends. I felt in her company the delightful influence of a cheerful temper, and soft, attractive manners,—enthusiasm which age cannot extinguish, and which spends but does not waste itself on small but not trifling objects.

I wish I could at seventy-two be such a woman! She told me that Rousseau, whilst he was writing so finely on education, and leaving his own children in the Foundling Hospital, defended himself with so much eloquence that even those who blamed him in their hearts, could not find tongues to answer him. Once at dinner, at Madame d'Ouditot's, there was a fine pyramid of fruit. Rousseau in helping himself took the peach which formed the base of the pyramid, and the rest fell immediately. 'Rousseau,' said she, 'that is what you always do with all our systems, you pull down with a single touch, but who will build up what you pull down?' I asked if he was grateful for all the kindness shown to him? 'No, he was ungrateful: he had a thousand bad qualities, but I turned my attention from them to his genius and the good he had done mankind.'

"After an excellent breakfast including tea, chocolate, coffee, buttered and unbuttered cakes, good conversation and good humour, came M. Cheron, husband of the Abbé Morellet's niece, who is translating 'Early Lessons,' French on one side and English on the other. Didot has undertaken to publish the 'Rational Primer,' which is much approved of here for teaching the true English pronunciation.

"Then we went to a lecture on Shorthand, or *Passigraphy*, and there we met Mr. Chenevix, who came home to dine with us, and stayed till nine, talking of Montgolfier's *belier* for throwing water to a great height. We have seen it and its inventor: something like Mr. Watt in manner, not equal to him in genius. He had received from M. De la Poype a letter my father wrote some years ago about the method of guiding balloons, and as far as he could judge he thought it might succeed.

"We went with Madame Recamier and the Russian Princess Dalgourski, to La Harpe's house, to hear him repeat some of his own verses. He lives in a wretched house, and we went up dirty stairs, through dirty passages, where I wondered how fine ladies' trains and noses could go, and were received in a dark small den by the philosopher, or rather Dévot, for he spurns the name of philosopher: he was in a dirty reddish night-gown, and very dirty night-cap bound round the forehead with a superlatively dirty chocolate-coloured ribbon. Madame Recamier, the beautiful, the elegant, robed in white satin trimmed with white fur, seated herself on the elbow of his arm-chair, and besought him to repeat his verses. Charlotte has drawn a picture of this scene. We met at La Harpe's Lady Elizabeth Foster and Lady Besborough: very engaging manners.

"We were a few days ago at a Bal d'Enfants; this you would translate a children's ball, and so did we, till we were set right by the learned:—not a single child was at this ball, and only half-a-dozen unmarried ladies: it is a ball given by mothers to their grown-up children. Charlotte appeared as usual to great advantage, and was much admired for her ease and unaffected manners. She danced one English country dance with M. De Crillon, son of the Gibraltar Duke: when she stood up, a gentleman came to me and exclaimed, 'Ah, Mademoiselle votre sœur va danser, nous attendons le moment où elle va *paraître.*' She appeared extremely well from not being anxious to appear at all. To-day we stayed at home to gain time for letters, &c., but thirteen visitors, besides the washerwoman, prevented our accomplishing all our great and good purposes. The visitors were all, except the washerwoman, so agree-

able, that even while they interrupted us, we did not know how to wish them gone."

On the 27th January Mr. Edgeworth received a peremptory order from the French Government to quit Paris immediately. He went with Maria to the village of Passy. Our friend, Madame Gautier, generously offered to him the use of her house there, but he would not compromise her. M. de Pastoret and M. Delessert visited him the next morning, fearless of Buonaparte and his orders, and the day after M. Pictet and M. Le Breton came to say that he could return to Paris. There had been some misapprehension from Mr. Edgeworth having been supposed to be brother to the Abbé Edgeworth. He wrote to Lord Whitworth that he would never deny or give up the honour of being related to the Abbé. Lord Whitworth advised him to state the exact degree of relationship, which he did, and we heard no more of the matter.

Miss Charlotte Edgeworth to C. S. Edgeworth.

"*Paris, Feb.* 21, 1803.

"We went yesterday to see the consecration of a Bishop at Nôtre Dame, and here I endured with satisfaction most intense cold for three hours, and saw a solemn ridiculous ceremony, and heard music that went through me: I could not have believed that sounds could have been so fine: the alternate sounds of voices and the organ, or both together, and then the faint, distant murmur of prayers: each peal so much in harmony as to appear like one note beginning softly, rising, rising, rising,—then dying slowly off. There was one man whose voice was so loud, so full and clear, that it was equal to

the voices of three men. The church itself is very fine: we were placed so as to see below us the whole ceremony. The solemnity of the manner in which they walked, their all being dressed alike, and differently from the rest of the people, rendered these priests a new set of beings. The ceremony appeared particularly ridiculous, as we could not hear a word that was said, because the church is so large, and we were at too great a distance, and all we could see was a Bishop dressing and undressing, or lying on the ground! The Archbishop of Paris, who performed the chief part of the ceremony, is a man about eighty years of age, yet he had the strength to go through the fatigue which such a ceremony requires for three hours together in very great cold, and every action was performed with as much firmness as a man of fifty could do it, and there was but one part which he left out,—the walking round along with the other bishops with the cross borne before them. We were told that he has often gone through similar fatigue, and in the evening, or an hour after, amused a company at dinner with cheerful, witty conversation: he is not a man of letters, but he has abilities and knowledge of the world. All these men were remarkably tall and fine-looking, some very venerable: there were about sixty assembled. It appears extraordinary that there should not be one little or mean-looking among a set of people who are not like soldiers chosen for their height, and as they must have come from different parts of France. I think there is a greater variety of sizes among the French than among us: if all the people who stand in the street of Edgeworthstown every Sunday were Frenchmen, you would see ten remarkably little for one that you see there, and ten remarkably

tall. I think there are more remarkably tall men in Ireland than in England.

"Maria is writing a story,[1] and has a little table by the fire, at which she sits as she used to do at Edgeworthstown for half an hour together without stirring, with her pen in her hand; then she scribbles on very fast. My father intends to present his lock, with a paper giving some account of it, by way of introduction to the society of which he is a member, La Société pour encourager les arts et metiers. I suppose you see in the newspapers that the ancient Academy is again established under the name of the Institute?"

When the churches were reopened in France, Buonaparte, with his usual attention to effect, was anxious that all religious ceremonies should be performed with the utmost pomp and magnificence, and we were advised to go to this consecration of a Bishop, the first that had been seen at Paris since the Revolution. As it was to be performed with all the splendour of former times, I went accordingly with Maria and Charlotte at eight o'clock in the morning, and never did I before or since feel anything like the cold of those three hours in the cathedral of Nôtre Dame. There were very few people present. Of these some were devoutly attentive to the ceremony, the rest stared and walked about as at any ordinary exhibition. The drive to and from Nôtre Dame was almost perilous from the ice and snow in the streets, as the horses could hardly keep

[1] Maria made a sketch for the story of "Madame de Fleury" about this time, but did not finish it till long afterwards. The incident of the locked-up children was told to her by Madame de Pastoret, to whom it had happened, and Maria took the name de Fleury from M. de Pastoret's country house, the Chateau de Fleury.

their feet in that long drive, which was very interesting, through a part of Paris which we had scarcely seen before.

Mrs. Edgeworth to Miss Sneyd.

"*Paris, Feb.* 22, 1803.

"The cough you mention has been epidemic here. The thermometer as low as 9° on the morning of the 15th; next day 40°, and the most charming weather has succeeded: the streets have been so well washed by the rain and scraped by the snow-cleaners, that they are actually dry and clean for the first time since October, which is fortunate, as the streets are crowded with people for the carnival, some in masks, some disguised as apothecaries, old women, harlequins, and knight-errants, followed by hundreds and thousands of men, women, and children, to whom they say what they can, generally nonsense devoid of wit.

"Last Thursday, *jeudigras*, we dined at two, and were at St. Germain's at six, at Madame Campan's, where we had been invited to see some plays acted by her pupils. The little theatre appeared already full when we entered. We stood a few seconds near the door, when Madame Campan cried out from above, 'Placez Madame Edgeworth, faites monter Madame et sa compagnie.' So we went up to the gallery, where we had very good places next to a Polish Princess and half-a-dozen of her countrywomen, who are all polite and well-bred. The crowd increased, many more than there was room for. The famous Madame Visconti and Lady Yarmouth sat behind us. Lady Elizabeth Foster and Lady Besborough not far from us; and below there were a number of English, the Duchess of

Gordon and her beautiful daughter, Lady Georgiana. Madame Louis Buonaparte, who had been one of Madame Campan's élèves, was the principal Frenchwoman. The piece, 'Esther,' was performed admirably; the singing of the choir of young girls charming, and the petite pièce, 'La Rosiere de Salency,' was better still: you know it is a charming thing, and was made so touching as to draw tears from every eye.

"N.B. Maria has seen Madame de Genlis.

"We leave this on Thursday next."

At the time this letter was written rumours that war would break out with England, began to be prevalent in Paris. Mr. Edgeworth inquired among his friends, who said they feared it was true. He decided to set out immediately, and we began to pack up. Other friends contradicted this fear. We were anxious on another account to leave Paris, from the bad state of Henry Edgeworth's health, his friends at Edinburgh urging us to go there to see him. Better news of him, and the hope that the rumours of war were unfounded, made us suspend our packing. M. Le Breton called, and said he was sure of knowing before that evening the truth as to Buonaparte's warlike intentions, and that if Mr. Edgeworth met him at a friend's that night, he would know by his suddenly putting on his hat that war was imminent. He was unable to visit us again, and afraid if he wrote that his letter might be intercepted, and still more was he afraid of being overheard if he said anything at the party where they were to meet. Mr. Edgeworth went, and saw M. Le Breton, who did suddenly put on his hat, and on Mr. Edgeworth's return to us he said we must go.

The next day was spent in taking leave of our kind friends, from whom we found it so painful to part, and who expressed so much regret at losing us, and so much doubt as to the probability of war, that Mr. Edgeworth promised that if on his arrival in London he heard of the recovery of his son at Edinburgh he would, if his Paris friends wrote to say Peace—return to them, and bring over the rest of his family from Ireland for a year's residence.

Maria to Miss Sneyd.

"*Calais, March* 4, 1803.

"At last, my dear Aunt Mary, we have actually left Paris. Perhaps we may be detained here for some days, as the wind is directly against us; but we have no reason to lament, as we are in Grandsire's excellent house, and have books and thoughts enough to occupy us. Thoughts of friends from whom we have parted, and of friends to whom we are going. How few people in this world are so rich in friends! When I reflect upon the kindness which has been shown to us abroad, and upon the affection that awaits us at home, I feel afraid that I shall never be able to deserve my share of all this happiness.

"Charlotte is perfectly well: I believe no young woman was ever more admired at Paris than she has been, and none was ever less spoiled by admiration."

"*Dover, March* 6.

"All alive and merry: just landed, after a fine passage of six hours."

On our arrival in London, we found the expected letter

from M. Le Breton. It had been agreed that if there was to be peace, he was to conclude his letter with "Mes hommages à la charmante Mademoiselle Charlotte:" if war, the *charmante* was to be omitted. He ended his letter, which made not the smallest allusion to politics or public events, with "Mes hommages à Mademoiselle Charlotte," and we set out for Edinburgh.

On the first rumours of war, while we were in France, Mr. Edgeworth wrote to warn his son Lovell, who was on his way from Geneva to Paris, but he never received the letter: he was stopped on his journey, made prisoner, and remained among the *détenus* till the end of the war in 1814.

Maria to Miss Sneyd.

"*Edinburgh, March* 19, 1803.

"Just arrived in Edinburgh, all four in perfect health. A bolt came out of the axletree just as we stopped at the door of this hotel; the only semblance of an accident that has befallen us.

"My father and mother have gone to Henry's lodgings, and I cannot employ myself better than in *bringing up* the history of our last week at Paris. The two most memorable events were Madame Campan's play and the visit to Madame de Genlis. The theatre at Madame Campan's was not much larger than our own; the dresses 'magnificent beyond description;' the acting and the dancing infinitely too good for any but young ladies intended for the stage. The play was Racine's 'Esther,' and it interested me the next day to read Madame de Sevigné's account of its representation by the young ladies of St. Cyr, under the patron-

age of Madame de Maintenon. Madame de Genlis' beautiful 'Rosiere de Salency' was acted after 'Esther,' and the scene where the mother denounces her daughter, and pushes her from her, was so admirably written and so admirably played, that it made me forget the stage, the actors, and the spectators,—I could not help thinking it real.

"Full of the pleasure I had received from the 'Rosiere de Salency,' I was impatient to pay a visit to Madame de Genlis."

R. L. Edgeworth continues.

"I take this from Maria to conclude it time enough for the post, that you might not be prevented one moment longer than is necessary from knowing that Henry is much better than I expected."

To Miss Sneyd.

"*Edinburgh, March,* 1803.

"Expect nothing in this letter but an account of Madame de Genlis.

"The third time you know, my dear Aunt Mary, pays for all, and I hope this third time that I begin to write to you I may be able to finish my letter. I believe I got no further in my account of our visit to Madame de Genlis than saying how eager we were to see her after having seen her beautiful 'Rosiere de Salency.' A few days afterwards we dined with Mr. and Mrs. Scotto,[1] rather a stupid party of gentlemen. After dinner my father called me out of the room and said, 'Now

[1] Mr. and Mrs. Scotto had apartments in the house where we lodged.

we will go to see Madame de Genlis.' She had previously written to say she would be glad to be personally acquainted with Mr. and Miss Edgeworth. She lives—where do you think?—where Sully used to live, at the Arsenal. Buonaparte has given her apartments there. Now I do not know what you imagined in reading Sully's Memoirs, but I always imagined that the Arsenal was one large building, with a façade to it like a very large hotel or a palace, and I fancied it was somewhere in the middle of Paris. On the contrary, it is quite in the suburbs. We drove on and on, and at last we came to a heavy archway, like what you see at the entrance of a fortified town: we drove under it for the length of three or four yards in total darkness, and then we found ourselves as well as we could see by the light of some dim lamps, in a large square court, surrounded by buildings: here we thought we were to alight; no such thing; the coachman drove under another thick archway, lighted at the entrance by a single lamp, we found ourselves in another court, and still we went on, archway after archway, court after court, in all which reigned desolate silence. I thought the archways, and the courts, and the desolate silence would never end: at last the coachman stopped, and asked for the tenth time where the lady lived. It is excessively difficult to find people in Paris: we thought the names of Madame de Genlis and the Arsenal would have been sufficient, but the whole of this congregation of courts, and gateways, and houses, is called the Arsenal, and hundreds and hundreds of people inhabit it who are probably perfect strangers to Madame de Genlis. At the doors where our coachman inquired, some answered that they knew nothing of her, some

that she lived in the Fauxbourg St. Germain, others believed that she might be at Passy, others had heard that she had apartments given to her by Government somewhere in the Arsenal, but could not tell where; while the coachman thus begged his way, we anxiously looking out at him, from the middle of the great square where we were left, listened for the answers that were given, and which often from the distance escaped our ears. At last a door pretty near to us opened, and our coachman's head and hat were illuminated by the candle held by the person who opened the door, and as the two figures parted with each other we could distinctly see the expression of their countenances and their lips move: the result of this parley was successful: we were directed to the house where Madame de Genlis lived, and thought all difficulties ended. No such thing, her apartments were still to be sought for. We saw before us a large, crooked, ruinous stone staircase, lighted by a single bit of candle hanging in a vile tin lantern in an angle of the bare wall at the turn of the staircase—only just light enough to see that the walls were bare and old, and the stairs immoderately dirty. There were no signs of the place being inhabited except this lamp, which could not have been lighted without hands. I stood still in melancholy astonishment, while my father groped his way into a kind of porter's lodge, or den, at the foot of the stairs, where he found a man who was porter to various people who inhabited this house. 'You know the Parisian houses are inhabited by hordes of different people, and the stairs are in fact streets, and dirty streets to their dwellings. The porter who was neither obliging nor intelligent, carelessly said that 'Madame de Genlis

logeait au seconde à gauche, qu'il faudrait tirer sa sonnette,' he believed she was at home, if she was not gone out. Up we went by ourselves, for this porter, though we were strangers, and pleaded that we were so, never offered to stir a step to guide or to light us. When we got to the second stage, we faintly saw by the light from the one candle at the first landing-place, two dirty large folding-doors, one set on the right and one on the left, and hanging on each a bell, no larger than what you see in the small parlour of a small English inn. My father pulled one bell and waited some minutes—no answer: pulled the other bell and waited —no answer: thumped at the left door—no answer: pushed and pulled at it—could not open it: pushed open one of the right hand folding doors—utter darkness: went in, as well as we could feel, there was no furniture. After we had been there a few seconds we could discern the bare walls and some strange lumber in one corner. The room was a prodigious height, like an old playhouse. We retreated, and in despair went down again to the stupid or surly porter. He came up stairs very unwillingly, and pointed to a deep recess between the stairs and the folding doors: 'Allez, voilà la porte et tirez la sonnette.' He and his candle went down, and my father had but just time to seize the handle of the bell, when we were again in darkness. After ringing this feeble bell we presently heard doors open, and little footsteps approaching nigh. The door was opened by a girl of about Honora's size, holding an ill-set-up, wavering candle in her hand, the light of which fell full upon her face and figure: her face was remarkably intelligent, dark sparkling eyes, dark hair, curled in the most fashionable long cork-screw ringlets over her eyes

and cheeks. She parted the ringlets to take a full view of us, and we were equally impatient to take a full view of her. The dress of her figure by no means suited the head and the elegance of her attitude: what her 'nether weeds' might be we could not distinctly see, but they seemed to be a coarse short petticoat, like what Molly Bristow's children would wear, not on Sundays, a woollen grey spencer above, pinned with a single pin by the lapels tight across the neck under the chin, and open all below. After surveying us, and hearing that our name was Edgeworth, she smiled graciously, and bid us follow her, saying, 'Maman est chez elle.' She led the way with the grace of a young lady who has been taught to dance, across two antechambers, miserable looking, but miserable or not, no house in Paris can be without them. The girl, or young lady, for we were still in doubt which to think her, led us into a small room, in which the candles were so well screened by a green tin screen that we could scarcely distinguish the tall form of a lady in black, who rose from her arm-chair by the fireside as the door opened: a great puff of smoke came from the huge fireplace at the same moment. She came forward, and we made our way towards her as well as we could through a confusion of tables, chairs, and work-baskets, china, writing-desks, and ink-stands, and bird-cages, and a harp. She did not speak, and as her back was now turned to both fire and candle, I could not see her face, or anything but the outline of her form, and her attitude; her form was the remains of a fine form, and her attitude that of a woman used to a better drawing-room. I, being foremost, and she silent, was compelled to speak to the figure in darkness: 'Madame de Genlis nous a fait

l'honneur de nous mander qu'elle voulait bien nous permettre de lui rendre visite, et de lui offrir nos respects,' said I, or words to that effect: to which she replied by taking my hand and saying something in which 'charmée' was the most intelligible word. Whilst she spoke she looked over my shoulder at my father, whose bow I presume told her he was a gentleman, for she spoke to him immediately as if she wished to please, and seated us in fauteuils near the fire.

"I then had a full view of her face and figure: she looked like the full-length picture of my great great grandmother Edgeworth, you may have seen in the garret, very thin and melancholy, but her face not so handsome as my great grandmother's; dark eyes, long sallow cheeks, compressed thin lips, two or three black ringlets on a high forehead, a cap that Mrs. Grier might wear, — altogether an appearance of fallen fortunes, worn out health, and excessive, but guarded irritability. To me there was nothing of that engaging, captivating manner which I had been taught to expect by many even of her enemies; she seemed to me to be alive only to literary quarrels and jealousies: the muscles of her face as she spoke, or as my father spoke to her, quickly and too easily expressed hatred and anger whenever any not of her own party were mentioned. She is now you know *devote acharnement*. When I mentioned with some enthusiasm the good Abbé Morellet, who has written so courageously in favour of the French exiled nobility and their children, she answered in a sharp voice, 'Oui, c'est un homme de beaucoup d'esprit, a ce qu'on dit, a ce que je crois même, mais il faut vous apprendre qu'il n'est pas des NOTRES.' My father spoke of Pamela, Lady Edward Fitzgerald, and explained how

he had defended her in the Irish House of Commons; instead of being pleased or touched, her mind instantly diverged into an elaborate and artificial exculpation of Lady Edward and herself, proving, or attempting to prove, that she never knew any of her husband's plans, that she utterly disapproved of them, at least of all she suspected of them. This defence was quite lost upon us, who never thought of attacking: but Madame de Genlis seems to have been so much used to be attacked, that she has defences and apologies ready prepared, suited to all possible occasions. She spoke of Madame de Stael's 'Delphine' with detestation, of another new and fashionable novel, 'Amélie,' with abhorrence, and kissed my forehead twice because I had not read it, 'Vous autres Anglaises vous êtes modestes!' Where was Madame de Genlis' sense of delicacy when she penned and published 'Les Chevaliers du Cigne?' Forgive me, my dear Aunt Mary, you begged me to see her with favourable eyes, and I went to see her after seeing her 'Rosiere de Salency' with the most favourable disposition, but I could not like her; there was something of malignity in her countenance and conversation that repelled love, and of hypocrisy which annihilated esteem, and from time to time I saw, or thought I saw through the gloom of her countenance, a gleam of coquetry. But my father judges much more favourably of her than I do; she evidently took pains to please him, and he says he is sure she is a person over whose mind he could gain great ascendancy: he thinks her a woman of violent passions, unbridled imagination, and ill-tempered, but *not* malevolent: one who has been so torn to pieces that she now turns upon her enemies, and longs to tear in her turn. He says she has certainly

great powers of pleasing, though I neither saw nor felt them. But you know, my dear aunt, that I am not famous for judging sanely of strangers on a first visit, and I might be prejudiced or mortified by Madame de Genlis assuring me that she had never read anything of mine except 'Belinda,' had heard of 'Practical Education,' and heard it much praised, but had never seen it. She has just published an additional volume of her 'Petits Romans,' in which there are some beautiful stories, but you must not expect another 'Mademoiselle de Clermont:' one such story in an age is as much as one can reasonably expect.

"I had almost forgotten to tell you that the little girl who showed us in, is a girl whom she is educating, '*Elle m'appelle maman, mais elle n'est pas ma fille.*' The manner in which this little girl spoke to Madame de Genlis, and looked at her, appeared to me more in her favour than anything else. She certainly spoke to her with freedom and fondness, and without any affectation. I went to look at what the child was writing, she was translating Darwin's 'Zoonomia.' I read some of her translation, it was excellent; she was, I think she said, ten years old. It is certain that Madame de Genlis made the present Duke of Orleans such an excellent mathematician, that when he was during his emigration in distress for bread, he taught mathematics as a professor in one of the German Universities. If we could see or converse with one of her pupils, and hear what they think of her, we should be able to form a better judgment than from all that her books and enemies say for or against her. I say her *books*, not her *friends* and enemies, for I fear she has no friends to plead for her, except her books. I never met any one of any party who was her friend:

this strikes me with real melancholy; to see a woman of the first talents in Europe, who had lived and shone in the gay court of the gayest nation in the world, now deserted and forlorn, living in wretched lodgings, with some of the pictures and finery, the wreck of her fortunes, before her eyes, without society, without a single friend, admired—and despised: she lives literally in spite, not in pity. Her cruelty in drawing a profligate character of the queen after her execution, in the 'Chevaliers du Cigne,' her taking her pupils at the beginning of the Revolution to the revolutionary clubs, her connection with the late Duke of Orleans and her hypocrisy about it, her insisting upon being governess to his children when the Duchess did not wish it, and its being supposed that it was she who instigated the Duke in all his horrible conduct; and more than all the rest, her own attacks and *apologies* have brought her into all this isolated state of reprobation. And now, my dear aunt, I have told you all I know, or have heard, or think about her; and perhaps I have tired you, but I fancied that it was a subject particularly interesting to you, and if I have been mistaken you will with your usual goodnature forgive me and say, 'I am sure Maria meant it kindly.'

"Now to fresh fields.—In London you know that we had the pleasure of meeting Mr. and Mrs. Sneyd, and Emma: there is such a general likeness between her and Charlotte, that they might pass for sisters. Mrs. Sneyd bribed us to like her by her extreme kindness. We went to Covent Garden theatre and saw the new play of 'John Bull:' some humour, and some pathos, and one good character of an Irishman, but the contrast between the elegance of the French theatre and

the 'grossièreté' of the English struck us much. But this is the judgment of a disappointed playwright!

"Now, Aunt Mary, scene changes to York, where we stayed a day to see the Minster; and as we had found a parcel of new books for us at Johnson's, from Lindley Murray, we thought ourselves bound to go and see him. We were told that he lived about a mile from York, and in the evening we drove to see him. A very neat-looking house: door opened by a pretty Quaker maid-servant: shown into a well-furnished parlour, cheerful fire, everything bespeaking comfort and happiness. On the sofa at the further end of the room was seated, quite upright, a Quaker-looking man in a pale brown coat, who never attempted to rise from his seat to receive us, but held out his hand, and with a placid, benevolent smile said, 'You are most welcome—I am heartily glad to see you; it is my misfortune that I cannot rise from my seat, but I must be as I am, as I have been these eighteen years.' He had lost the use of one arm and side, and cannot walk—not paralytic, but from the effects of a fever. Such mild, cheerful resignation, such benevolence of manners and countenance I never saw in any human being. He writes solely with the idea of doing good to his fellow-creatures. He wants nothing in this life, he says, neither fortune nor fame—he seems to forget that he wants health—he says, 'I have so many blessings.' His wife, who seemed to love and admire 'my husband' as the first and best of human beings, gave us excellent tea and abundance of good cake.

"I have not room here under the seal for the Minster, nor for the giant figures on Alnwick castle, nor for the droll man at the beautiful town of Durham;

but I or somebody better than me will tell of them, and of Mrs. Green's drawings and painted jessamine in her window, and Mr. Wellbeloved and his charming children, and Mr. Horner,[1] at Newcastle, and Dr. Trotter, at ditto: and now turn to what is written in red ink.

"It is very gratifying to us to see how much Henry is beloved by such people as Mr. and Mrs. Stewart. I *will* say nothing of them, but I must tell you that we have just returned from dining with General Vyse, who said he had but one toast to propose, 'the health of my cousins the Miss Sneyds.'

"My father says, 'I hope you have done;' and so perhaps do you."

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edinburgh, March* 30, 1803.

"My dear Aunt,

"In a few days I hope we shall see you. I long to see you again, and to hear your voice, and to receive from you those kind looks and kind words, which custom cannot stale. I believe that the more variety people see, the more they become attached to their first and natural friends. I had taken a large sheet of paper to tell you some of the wonders we have seen in our nine days' stay in Edinburgh, but my father has wisely advised me to content myself with a small sheet, as I am to have the joy of talking to you so soon, and may then say volumes in the same time that I could write pages. I cannot express the pleasure we have felt in being introduced to Henry's delightful society of friends here,

[1] Francis Horner, just come from Edinburgh.

both those he has chosen for himself and those who have chosen him. Old and young, grave and gay, join in speaking of him with a degree of affection and esteem that is most touching and gratifying. Mr. and Mrs. Stewart surpassed all that I had expected, and I had expected much. Mr. Stewart is said to be naturally or habitually grave and reserved, but towards us he has broken through his habits or his nature, and I never conversed with any one with whom I was more at ease. He has a grave sensible face, more like the head of Shakespear than any other head or print that I can remember. I have not heard him lecture; no woman can go to the public lectures here, and I don't choose to go in men's or boys' clothes, or in the pocket of the Irish giant, though he is here and well able to carry me. Mrs. Stewart has been for years wishing in vain for the pleasure of hearing one of her husband's lectures. She is just the sort of woman you would like, that you would love. I do think it is impossible to know her without loving her; indeed, she has been so kind to Henry, that it would be doubly impossible (an Irish impossibility) to us. Yet you know people do not always love because they have received obligations. It is an additional proof of her merit, and of her powers of pleasing, that she makes those who *are* under obligations to her, forget that they are bound to be grateful, and only remember that they think her good and agreeable."

Edinburgh was at this time a peculiarly delightful residence. The mixture of the wise, learned, and distinguished men who then held the different philosophical and scientific professorships there, with the

number of gay, brilliant, and ardent youths from all parts of the world who came to attend their lectures, the charm of the highborn courtesy which distinguished the ladies of this society, the great kindness of their hospitality, and the excellence of their conversation, contributed to make our very short stay at Edinburgh one of the most delightful periods of our lives. And for life were the friendships we then formed with the Dugald Stewarts, Miss Elizabeth Hamilton, the Alisons, and Gregories, and Professor Playfair.

Maria to Miss Honora Edgeworth.

"*Glasgow, April* 4, 1803.

"My dear Honora,

"I have not forgotten my promise to write to you, and I think I can give you pleasure by telling you that Henry is getting better every day, and that we have all been extremely happy in the company of several of his friends in Edinburgh and Glasgow. He has made these friends by his own good qualities, and good conduct, and we hear them speak of him with the greatest esteem and affection. This morning Doctor Birkbeck, one of Henry's friends, took us to see several curious machines, in a house where he gives lectures on mechanical and chemical subjects. He is going to give a lecture on purpose for children, and he says he took the idea for doing so from 'Practical Education.' He opened a drawer and showed to me a little perspective machine he had made from the print of my father's; and we were also very much surprised to see in one of his rooms a large globe of silk, swelled out and lighted by a lamp withinside, so that when the room was darkened

we could plainly see the map of the world painted on it, as suggested in ' Practical Education.' My father mentioned to this gentleman my Aunt Charlotte's invention[1] of painting the stars on the inside of an umbrella: he was much pleased with it, and I think he will make such an umbrella. Amongst other agreeable things, this gentleman told us he thought Henry's machine for showing a uniform and accelerated motion, the best and simplest he had ever seen. I hope William has not broken the prism which Aunt Mary gave him: if it is safe, it will be the means of great entertainment to him when my father comes home. Give my love to him, and tell him I am much obliged to him for his letter; I am glad that kite-making has employed him so happily, and I hope he has had another success. Tell Sneyd that we saw at Edinburgh his old friend the Irish giant. I suppose he remembers seeing him at Bristol? he is so tall that he can with ease lean his arm on the top of the room door. I stood beside him, and the top of my head did not reach to his hip. My father laid his hand withinside of the giant's hand, and it looked as small as little Harriet's would in John Langan's. This poor giant looks very sallow and unhealthy, and seemed not to like to sit or stand all day for people to look at him."

At Glasgow we made acquaintance with Professor Young, who then held the Greek chair at that university, and who, Mr. Edgeworth said, was even after all the distinguished men he had known, the most lively converser he ever met, the readiest upon every variety of subject to every variety of person. Here we were

[1] This idea of reversing the usual sidereal globe and forming it so as to represent the sky and stars as they appear to us, I have seen carried out in one of the London scientific shows.

received by Mr. Stewart's brother-in-law, Mr. Bannatyne, with the most warm-hearted hospitality. He was a man of remarkable ability, with the most benevolent countenance I ever beheld. His family are my very dear friends to this day.

We returned home by Port Patrick, visiting my father at Collon, and Mrs. Ruxton on our way home. After our return Maria immediately occupied herself with preparing for the press "Popular Tales," which were published this year. She also began "Emilie de Coulanges," "Madame de Fleury," and "Ennui," and wrote "Leonora" with the romantic purpose I have already mentioned.

My brother Francis remained some time with us during the year 1804, chiefly occupied with the Telegraph. Maria, as well as everybody else in the house, was employed in copying out the vocabularies used in telegraphic conversations: but she found time to write "Griselda," which she amused herself with at odd moments in her own room without telling her father what she was about. When finished, she sent it to Johnson, who had the goodnature, at her request, to print a title-page for a single copy without her name to it: he then sent it over to Mr. Edgeworth as a new novel just come out. Mr. Edgeworth read it with surprise and admiration. He could not believe Maria could have had the actual time to write it, and yet it was so like her style; he at last exclaimed, "It must be Anna's. Anna has written this to please me. It is by some one we are interested in, Mary was so anxious I should read it." Miss Sneyd was in the secret, and had several times put it before him on the table: at last she told him it was Maria's. He was amused at the trick, and delighted at having admired the book without knowing its author.

To Miss Charlotte Sneyd.

"*Black Castle, December,* 1804.

"Though Henry will bring you all the news of this enchanted castle, and though you will hear it far better from his lips than from my pen, I cannot let him go without a line. I need not tell you I am perfectly happy here, and only find the day too short. Pray make Henry give you an account of the grand dinner we were at, and the Spanish priest who called Rousseau and Voltaire *vagabones,* and the gentleman who played the 'Highland Laddie' on the guitar, and of Mr. Grainger, who was *present* at one of the exhibitions of that German spectre-monger celebrated in Wraxall.

"The cottages are improving here, the people have paved their yards, and plant roses against their walls. The race of mantuamakers at Navan also much improved: one pretty little girl was here to-day with mourning (Lady Kilwarden is dead) for my aunt, if you should want her handywork.

"My aunt likes 'Ennui.' I had thoughts of finishing it here, but every day I find some excuse for idleness."

To Miss Honora Edgeworth.

"*Black Castle, Jan.,* 1805.

"My dear Honora,

"I have thought of you often when I heard things that would entertain you, and thought I had collected a great store, but when I rummage in my head, for want of having had, or taken time to keep the drawers of my cabinet of memory tidy, I cannot find one single thing that I want, except that it is

said that plants raised from cuttings do not bear such fine flowers as those raised from seeds.—That a lady, whose parrot had lost all its feathers, made him a flannel jacket.—That I saw a convolvulus and a hyacinth, both painted above twenty years ago: the hyacinth with the finest blue paint that could be procured from London, the convolvulus with common powder-blue: the hyacinth is faded as if it had been worn in one's head for a week, the convolvulus looks as if it had been this instant pulled in Sneyd's garden.

"There has been a plague of earwigs this season at Sir Robert Staples's: he found it necessary to pour boiling water down the sides of the house to kill them—I hear, but as I have not seen, I believe with only one ear.

"I will bring a specimen of the silk spun by the *Processionaires*, of whom my aunt gave you the history. There is a cock here who is as great a tyrant in his own way as Buonaparte, and a poor Barbary cock who has no claws, has the misfortune to live in the same yard with him; he will not suffer this poor defenceless fellow to touch a morsel or grain of all the good things Margaret throws to them till he and all his protegées are satisfied."

To C. S. Edgeworth, Esq.

"*Edgeworthstown, Feb.* 9, 1805.

"My dear Sneyd,

"We all missed you very much on Mrs. Beaufort's wedding-day, January 29, which we celebrated with a sort of masquerade without masks,—a Twelfth Night such as we used to have, but we wanted gentle-

men sadly. My father, Henry, and you were terrible losses; nevertheless we were very merry and wonderful noisy.

"*Dramatis Personæ.*

"*Miss H. Beaufort.* Jenny the Romp, in the Journey to London—a very decent romp.

"*Miss Louisa Beaufort.* Mrs. John Nettleby, admirably dressed with immense white feathers and French ringlets in her eyes: she looked and spoke quite like a dashing would-be young woman of fashion, and wanted nothing but a husband and Mrs. Granby to torment.

"*Miss Charlotte E.* Mrs. Heidelburg, an excellent old lady with treble ruffles, and black lace hood, and long waist, a slow voice and prim manners, dignified sentiments and long-winded morality: in fine contrast to the other characters.

"*Mrs. Edgeworth.* Mrs. Candor, a full scandal-bag: she and Mrs. John Nettleby had much conversation about the present anecdotes of the day, which shocked Mrs. Heidelburg's delicacy much.

"*Miss E.* Madame Duval, the old Frenchwoman in 'Evelina:' hair drawn up to a prodigious height, powdered and surmounted with scarlet flowers, feathers, and trumpery of all sorts, the whole holding by two pins, which she was in dread all night should be pulled out by Squire Richard in the Journey to London, admirably played by William. He was at once noisy and countrified, and as full of clownish, schoolboy practical jokes as Captain Mirvan himself, and once frightened 'Madame French' nearly into fits by throwing a whole collared eel to her for supper. He was also wondrous jocose with Mrs. John Nettleby's spoiled children,

Fanny, Harriet, and Fanny Brown, and made more of his whips and spurs than we could have thought possible.

"*Miss Honora E.* Miss Judy, the imaginary governess to Mrs. John Nettleby's children, so well dressed and so well acted."

"This morning arrived a very large packet for my Aunt Mary, franked by William Pitt!! Curiosity's eyes were all agaze. When opened, it proved to be an old book, a treatise on Exchange, a thick octavo. Upon further examination it was found that there were divers snug cells cut in the leaves, in which were bedded—spectacles for Aunt Mary, two cakes of white paint that will never change colour, a machine for mending pens for William, three yards of clog-springs for Maria, with a very entertaining letter from Francis Beaufort, chiefly giving an account of Betty, the young Roscius. Francis says he is an imitator of Kemble and Siddons, and has learned from Cook to distort his eyes: he recites some tragic speeches well, but often rants. The public go mad about him: the Royal Dukes' carriages at his door! bulletins of his health pasted up! actors all subservient to his caprices! one night he refused to act till the manager had played at leapfrog over his back! If he is not spoiled it will be a wonder indeed.

"Mrs. Barbauld has written a very kind letter to me, she says: 'It is worth your father's while to come to England, were it only to see his little granddaughter Zoe, she is such a pretty little creature, and such an instance of her father's skill.'

"My father yesterday at dinner gave us a truly pathetic account of that Miss Kitty whom the benevolent

Usher Edgeworth wrote about. Pray, my dear Sneyd, if you have not bought my hat, do not, but give the guinea and half note to Usher E. for this poor creature."

To Miss Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Feb.* 26, 1805.

"My dear Sophy,

"I have almost finished working a pair of sleeves for Mrs. Stewart, the ditto of yours in *shining* cotton, which I heartily repent, because shining cotton will not 'wash and wear for ever, ma'am, and make an under-petticoat afterwards.'

"Besides I have been reading *a power* of good books: 'Montesquieu sur la Grandeur et Decadence des Romains,' which I recommend to you as a book you will admire, because it furnishes so much food for thought, it shows how history may be studied for the advantage of mankind, not for the mere purpose of remembering facts and repeating them.

"Sneyd has come home to spend a week of vacation with us. He is now full of logic, and we perpetually hear the words *syllogisms,* and *predicates, majors* and *minors, universals* and *particulars, affirmatives* and *negatives,* and BAROK and BARBARA, not Barbara Allen or any of her relations: and we have learnt by logic that a stone is not an animal, and conversely that an animal is not a stone. I really think a man talking logic on the stage might be made as diverting as the character of the 'Apprentice,' who is arithmetically mad; pray read it: my father read it to us a few nights ago, and though I had a most violent headache, so that I was forced to hold my head on both sides whilst I laughed, yet I

could not refrain. Much I attribute to my father's reading, but something must be left to Murphy. I have some idea of writing in the intervals of my *severer studies* for 'Professional Education,' a comedy for my father's birthday, but I shall do it up in my own room, and shall not produce it till it is finished. I found the first hint of it in the strangest place that anybody could invent, for it was in Dallas's History of the Maroons, and you may read the book to find it out, and ten to one you miss it. At all events pray read the book, for it is extremely interesting and entertaining: it presents a new world with new manners to the imagination, and the whole bears the stamp of truth. It is not well written in general, but there are particular parts admirable from truth of description and force of feeling. I will read 'Percival' whenever I meet with it, but I am not likely to meet with it on the gravel walk.

"Lady Spencer, when she saw Francis, was very civil to him, and expressed the greatest anxiety about the loss of 'Leonora,' 'public loss,' &c., &c. We sent the recovered packet a week ago. I had a very friendly letter from Mrs. Powys, inquiring for Lovell, and highly, I think extravagantly, praising 'Griselda.'

"Give my love to my uncle and Margaret, and tell them I hear the Float[1] is sunk. It is well we were not upon it! The story of the sinking has been told to me in half-a-dozen different ways, and the report changes as fast as the figure of a dragon in the clouds on a

[1] The Float, or raft, on which we crossed the river Inny, in what Mrs. Greville called "The Yellow Dwarf's country," between Edgeworthstown and Pakenham Hall, on the way to Black Castle, now replaced by a bridge, but a railway station near it is called the Float Station.

windy day. First it was 'an ass laden with Spanish dollars belonging to one Tierney, of Drogheda, that sank it entirely, only the man caught by the rope and was saved.' Then it was 'nine cars loaded with yarn, please your honour, coming to the fair, and Tierney of Drogheda along with them, and they all went down, and Tierney himself and the horses swam ashore.' Then five minutes afterwards we hear that 'the yarn was saved, and nothing in life went down but the Float itself, though all the men, and cars, and yarn were upon it!' To gain any more correct information at this hour (ten) of the night, and on such a night, would be beyond the power of any 'of woman born:' for at this hour, of a fair-day,

> 'Men, asses, dollars, yarn in gay confusion fall,
> And one oblivious stream of whiskey covers all.'

"Give my love to Letty Corry, and tell her that my father was as much charmed with Madame de Stael's[1] Memoirs as she was, and thinks the letter she wrote and intended to send to M. de Silly when she resolved to kill herself, is one of the most pathetic things he ever read.

"Your little goddaughter Sophy is one of the most engaging little creatures I ever saw, and knows almost all the birds and beasts in Bewick from the tom-tit to the hip-po-pot-a-mus, and names them in such a sweet little droll voice.

"Mrs. Molloy has heard from her son, who is in Jamaica, the young man about whom Mr. Richards so benevolently interested himself."

[1] Madame de Stael of Louis XVth's time.

For this family Maria exerted herself for many years indefatigably. Mrs. Molloy held a good farm under Mr. Edgeworth, but the vision of a property in Jamaica led to their ruin. The young man whom Maria mentions, and who went to Jamaica to claim it, was scared by an Obeah woman whom he had offended, he wasted away and died, and the rest of the family spent all they had in endeavours to recover this Jamaica property. At last they had to give up their farm; all the sisters went out to service, one of the sons enlisted, and for the other Maria succeeded in getting a good situation as coach agent, at Westport, so that many years after, when the farm the Molloys formerly held, was out of lease he was able to retake it, but begged that "my eldest sister, Mrs. Green, may be allowed to live there till she dies, as she took care of all of us when we were little, and now she is a widow." She did live at the farm and managed it till she died, and this grateful brother is living there now. His son is a surgeon in H. M. service.

Maria to Henry Edgeworth, at Edinburgh.

"*Edgeworthstown, March,* 1805.

"My very dear Henry,

"I think you were quite right in all your Union and anti-Union battle. It gives me the most sincere pleasure to see your letters to my father written just as if you were talking to a favourite friend of your own age, and with that manly simplicity characteristic of your mind and manner from the time you were able to speak. There is something in this perfect openness and in the courage of daring to be always yourself,

which attaches more than I can express, more than all the Chesterfieldian arts and graces that ever were practised. I am really very sorry that poor Lord Buchan rose from his sick-bed[1] to see what was so little worth seeing. I wish I had known at the time how much I ought to have been flattered, and I would have conducted myself with becoming propriety. I hope he will never do so any more. If he will come here, and if I have the headache, I will get up to receive him :—mortal woman cannot do more.—Yes, if I were Madame Recamier with her pretty bed, &c., &c., I would receive him in my bed-chamber, but at present Fanny's bed, as you very well know, would prevent that!

"*To business.* I send you the 'Modern Griselda' for Mrs. Alison, with a note for her, and my hearty love, not for yourself, but for her, and a little bit of it, as much as she thinks *proper*, for Mr. Alison.

"The worked sleeves are for Mrs. Stewart, and you are to offer them to her,—nobody can say I do not know how to choose my ambassadors well! If Mrs. Stewart should begin to say, 'O! it is a pity Miss Edgeworth should spend her time at such work!' please to interrupt her speech, though that is very rude, and tell her that I like work very much, and that I have only done this at odd times, after breakfast you know, when my father reads out Pope's Homer, or when there are long sittings, when it is much more agreeable to move one's fingers than to have to sit with hands crossed or clasped immoveably. I by no means accede to the doctrine that ladies cannot attend to anything else when they are

[1] Henry had mentioned, that when we were at Edinburgh Lord Buchan had, when ill in bed, got up and come to a party to meet Maria.

working: besides, it is contrary, is not it, to all the theories of Zoonomia? Does not Doctor Darwin show that certain habitual motions go on without interrupting trains of thought? And do not common sense and experience, whom I respect even above Dr. Darwin, show the same thing?

"Zoonomia Brown's brother shall be found, and shall have all due attention paid to him. People of the literary corps, I think, are bound to be kind to one another in all parts of the world; and we, who have received so much advantage from this species of free-masonry, certainly should not neglect the return of good for good.

"I am glad a son of Doctor Darwin's is over your head, though I dare say he makes a thundering noise stamping about, for he is of a giant brood.

"Upon my word, it is a fine thing to be an Edinburgh Reviewer, £200 a year and ten guineas a sheet! Poor authors must hide their diminished heads. But it is always better diversion to tear, than to be torn to pieces. I should not however like to be one of the tearers, except it was the person who wrote the review of 'Dumont and Bentham.' I envy that man whoever he is, but you never will tell me who he is. I assure you my envy would not prompt me to murder him.

"Yes, pray consult Mr. Stewart about your thesis, he is so benevolent, I am sure he will spare you five minutes of his precious time, and when you have his opinion you will be safe.

"My father has written and mentioned your yeomanry corps, and Charlotte will write to you her own pretty self."

Maria to Miss Sophy Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, March* 25, 1805.

"To-morrow we all, viz., Mr. Edgeworth, two Miss Sneyds, and Miss Harriet Beaufort, and Miss Fanny Brown, and Miss Maria, and Miss Charlotte, and Miss Honora, and Mr. William Edgeworth, go in one coach and one chaise to Castle Forbes, to see a play acted by the ladies Elizabeth and Adelaide Forbes, Miss Parkins, Lord Rancliffe, Lord Forbes, and I don't know how many grandees with tufts on their heads, for every grandee man must now you know have a tuft or ridge of hair upon the middle of his pate. Have you read 'Kotzebue's Paris?' Some parts entertaining, mostly stuff. We have heard from Lovell, still at Verdun, and in hopes of peace, poor fellow."

Maria to C. Sneyd Edgeworth, at Trinity College, Dublin.

"*Edgeworthstown, May* 4, 1805.

"I am perfectly well, dear Sneyd, and rejoice every day more and more that you did not come down here on my account, or on any account to lose your chance, by imprudent good-nature, of another premium. Believe me, the will was as good, far better in my opinion than the deed. I thank you from the bottom of my heart, if that is better than the top, for the kindness you have shown me.

"We are all very happy and tolerably merry with the assistance of William and the young tribe, who are always at his heels and in full chorus with him. Char-

lotte *cordials* me twice a day with 'Cecilia,' which she reads charmingly, and which entertains me as much at the third reading as it did at the first.

"I am much obliged to Lady Elizabeth Pakenham for the gum-bottle, and the first carman we can expedite shall call upon you. But, dear Sneyd, do not waste your time on commissions.

"We are a little, but very little afraid of being swallowed up by the French: they have so much to swallow and digest before they come to us! They did come once very near to be sure, but they got nothing by it."

To Miss S. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, June* 1, 1805.

"My father's birthday was kept yesterday, much more agreeably than last year, for then we had company in the house. Yesterday Sneyd, now at home for his vacation, who is ever the promoter of gaiety, contrived a pretty little Fête Champêtre, which surprised us all most agreeably. After dinner he persuaded me that it was indispensably necessary for my health that I should take an airing; accordingly the chaise came to the door, and Anne Nangle, and my mother, with little Lucy in her arms, and Maria, were rolled off, and after them on horseback came rosy Charlotte, all smiles, and Henry, with eyes brilliant with pleasure—riding again with Charlotte after eight months' absence. It was a delightful evening, and we thought we were pleasing ourselves sufficiently by the airing, so we came home *thinking of nothing at all,* when as we drove round our ears were suddenly struck

with the sound of music, and as if by enchantment, a fairy festival appeared upon the green. In the midst of an amphitheatre of verdant festoons suspended from white staffs, on which the scarlet streamers of the yeomen were flying, appeared a company of youths and maidens in white, their heads adorned with flowers, dancing; while their mothers and their little children were seated on benches round the amphitheatre. John Langan sat on the pier of the dining-room steps, with Harriet on one knee and Sophy on the other, and Fanny standing beside him. In the course of the evening William danced a reel with Fanny and Harriet, to the great delight of the spectators. Cakes and syllabubs served in great abundance by good Kitty, formed no inconsiderable part of the pleasures of the evening. William, who is at present in the height of electrical enthusiasm, proposed to the dancers a few electrical sparks, to complete the joys of the day. All, men, women and children, flocked into the study after him to be *shocked*, and their various gestures and expressions of surprise and terror mixed with laughter, were really diverting to my mother, Anne Nangle and me, who had judiciously posted ourselves in the gallery.[1] Charlotte and Sneyd, as soon as it was dark, came to summon us, and we found the little amphitheatre on the grassplat illuminated, the lights mixed with the green boughs and flowers were beautiful, and boys with flambeaux waving about, had an excellent effect. I do wish you could have seen the

[1] Round the room called by courtesy the Study, but really a workshop, laboratory, and room of all-work, was a gallery with shelves in the wall at that time full of books. This gallery was a favourite resort for all the young people of the house.

honest, happy face of George, as he held his flambeau bolt upright at his station, looking at his own pretty daughter Mary. O, my dear aunt, how much our pleasure would have been increased if you had been sitting beside us at the dining-room window."

The illness to which Maria refers in her letter of May 4, was very severe. Mr. Edgeworth was from home at the time: he had been summoned to London to give evidence on the trial of Judge Fox before the House of Lords; the Miss Sneyds and Honora accompanied him to visit their relations. It was long before Maria recovered her strength. She had a low, nervous fever, aggravated by violent toothache; to allay the pain she put a small bit of opium on the tooth: it affected her in the most alarming manner. Lemon juice which I gave her, restored her consciousness, and the smell and taste of lemon were ever after delightful to her; but she continued to feel the effects of this accident for some time. She was unable to leave her room, or to read, or even to speak; she liked to be read to, though scarcely able to express her thanks for the comfort it afforded her. The first pleasure she was able to enjoy, when just strong enough to come down and lie on the sofa in the library, was the hearing Charlotte read out to her the "Lay of the Last Minstrel;" she often recurred to the exquisite delight it gave to her. Lady Granard had kindly sent it, thinking it would interest her: she little knew how great that interest would be: the opening of that book was an era in Maria's life, the beginning of her enthusiastic admiration of Walter Scott and his works.

Maria to Miss Margaret Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, June* 21, 1805.

"My dear Margaret,

"That thief Procrastination shall not rob me of the present time, and this minute I will do what I have intended to do these two months—tell you that I do not forget you or all your kindness, or all the pleasure I had in your company.

"I had a most pleasant long letter from my father to-day. He has become acquainted with Mrs. Crewe—'Buff and blue and Mrs. Crewe'—and gives an account of a *déjeuner* at which he *assisted* at her house at Hampstead, as quite delightful. Miss Crewe charmed him by praising 'To-morrow,' and he claimed, he says, remuneration on the spot—a song, which it is not easy to obtain: she sang, and he thought her singing worthy of its celebrity. He was charmed with old Doctor Burney, who at eighty-two was the most lively, well-bred, agreeable man in the room. Lord Stanhope begged to be presented to him, and he thought him the most wonderful man he ever met.

"Tell my Aunt 'Leonora' is in the press."

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Sept.* 6, 1805.

"My dear, good, kind Aunt,

"Thank you, thank you. Unless you could jump into that skin out of which I was ready to jump when your letter was read, you could not tell how very much I am obliged by your so kindly consenting to come.

"I have been at Pakenham Hall and Castle Forbes: at Pakenham Hall I was delighted with 'that sweetest music,' the praises of a friend, from a person of judgment and taste. I do not know when I have felt so much pleasure as in hearing sweet Kitty Pakenham speak of your Sophy; I never saw her look more animated or more pretty than when she was speaking of her.

"Lady Elizabeth Pakenham has sent to me a little pony, as quiet and almost as small as a dog, on which I go trit trot, trit trot; but I hope it will never take it into its head to add

'When we come to the stile,
Skip we go over.'

"I have been reading Lady Hertford and Lady Pomfret's letters, some amusing, many trifling, and the eternal compliments insufferably tiresome. Lady Pomfret's letters from Italy entertained me, and would, I think, entertain you. Macklin's Life is clumsily written, but entertaining: he was a wonderful old man."

To Miss Sophy Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Feb.* 7, 1806.

"You wish to know how we went on at Farnham: in two words, *extremely well.* You and my aunt did not overpraise any of the inhabitants. My father desires me to say to my aunt that he likes both Lord and Lady Farnham almost as well as she does. Their unaffected goodness to my little cousin Foxes is quite touching.

"I am ashamed to tell you I have been so idle that I have not yet finished Madame de Fleury. You will

allow that we have gadded about enough lately: Sonna, Pakenham Hall, Farnham, and Castle Forbes. I don't think I told you that I grew quite fond of Lady Judith Maxwell, and I flatter myself she did not dislike me, because she did not keep me in the ante-chamber of her mind, but let me into the boudoir at once. Lord Farnham was so good as to trust my father with his little favourite, Richard Fox. Assure my aunt that we all like Killikeen[1] better than Drigget: Killikeen is indeed most beautiful.

"So Lord Henry Petty is Chancellor of the Exchequer—at twenty-four on the pinnacle of glory!

"Sneyd and Charlotte have begun Sir Charles Grandison: I almost envy them the pleasure of reading Clementina's history for the first time. It is one of those pleasures which is never repeated in life."

Maria to Mrs. Edgeworth.

"*Rosstrevor, March* 21, 1806.

"I have spent a very happy week at Collon; I never saw your mother in such excellent spirits. She and Doctor Beaufort were so good as to bring me to Dundalk, where my aunt had appointed to meet me; but her courage failed her about going over the Mountain road, and she sent Mr. Corry's chaise with hired horses. I foresaw we should have a battle about those horses, and so we had—only a skirmish, in which I came off victorious! Your father, who, next to mine, is I think the best and most agreeable traveller in the world, walked us about Dundalk and to the Quay, &c., whilst

[1] The different woods at Farnham.

the horses were resting, and we ate black cherries and were very merry. They pitied me for the ten mile stage I was to go alone, but I did not pity myself, for I had Sir William Jones' and Sir William Chambers' Asiatic Miscellany. The metaphysical poetry of India, however, is not to my taste; and though the Indian Cupid with his bow of sugar-cane and string of bees and five arrows for the five senses is a very pretty and very ingenious little fellow, I have a preference in favour of our own Cupid, and of the two would rather leave orders with 'my porter' to admit the 'well-known boy.'[1]

"Besides the company of Sir William Jones, I had the pleasure of meeting on the road Mr. Parkinson Ruxton and Sir Chichester Fortescue, who had been commissioned by my aunt to hail me; they accordingly did so, and after a mutual broadside of compliments, they sheered off. The road to Newry is like Wales —Ravensdale, three miles of wood, glen, and mountain.

"My aunt and Sophy were on the steps of the inn at Newry to receive me. Whilst we were waiting in the dirty parlour of this dirtiest of inns, the door opened, and a lady and gentleman entered with a very fine little boy, whom the lady, with a very affectionate countenance and sweet voice, presented to me. 'A little gentleman, Miss Edgeworth, who wishes much to see you, and to whom, as well as to his parents, you have been very kind.' I will not tell you who father, mother, or child were: guess. One of them, I can tell

[1] From an address to Cupid, by the Duc de Nivernois, translated by Mr. Edgeworth.

you, was an Edgeworth. They spoke with the greatest gratitude of the kindness they had received from Mr. and Mrs. Edgeworth, and the Misses Sneyd and Sneyd. Well, who were they? Mr. and Mrs. O'Beirne,[1] and my little godson, Edgeworth O'Beirne. Mr. O'Beirne has been invited by rich merchants of Newry to keep a school there.

"The road from Newry to Rosstrevor is both sublime and beautiful. The inn at Rosstrevor is like the best sort of English breakfasting inn. But to proceed with my journey, for I must go two miles and a half from Rosstrevor to my aunt's house. Sublime mountains and sea—road, a flat, gravelled walk, walled on the precipice side. You see a slated English or Welsh-looking farm-house amongst some stunted trees, apparently in the sea; you turn down a long avenue of firs, only three feet high, but old-looking, six rows deep on each side. The two former proprietors of this mansion had opposite tastes—one all for straight, and the other all for serpentine lines; and there was a war between snug and picturesque, of which the traces appear every step you proceed. You seem driving down into the sea, to which this avenue leads; but you suddenly turn and go back from the shore, through stunted trees of various sorts scattered over a wild common, then a dwarf mixture of shrubbery and orchard, and you are at the end of the house, which is pretty. The front is ugly, but from it you look upon the bay of Carlingford—Carlingford Head opposite to you—vessels under sail, near and distant—little islands, sea-birds, and landmarks standing in the sea. Behind the house the

[1] Mr. O'Beirne had been tutor to Colonel Fox's sons at Foxhall.

mountains of Morne. I saw all this with admiration, tired as I was, for it was seven o'clock. In the parlour is a surprising chimney-piece, as gigantic as that at Grandsire's at Calais, with wonderful wooden ornaments and a tablet representing Alexander's progress through India, he looking very pert, driving four lions.

"After dinner I was so tired, that in spite of all my desire to see and hear, I was obliged to lie down and refit. After resting, but not sleeping, I groped my way down the broad old staircase, *felt* my road, passed *two* clockcases on the landing-place, and arrived in the parlour, where I was glad to see candles and tea, and my dear aunt, and Sophy, and Margaret's illumined, affectionate faces. Tea. 'Come, now,' says my aunt, 'let us show Maria the wonderful passage; it looks best by candlelight.' I followed my guide through a place that looks like Mrs. Radcliffe in lower life—passage after passage, very low-roofed, and full of strange lumber; came to a den of a bed-chamber, then another, and a study, all like the hold of a ship, and fusty; but in this study were mahogany bookcases, glass doors, and well-bound, excellent books. All kinds of tables, broken and stowed on top of each other, and parts of looking-glasses, looking as if they had been there a hundred years, and jelly glasses on a glass stand, as if somebody had supped there the night before. Turn from the study and you see a staircase, more like a step-ladder, very narrow, but one could squeeze up at a time, by which we went into a place like that you may remember at the Post House in the Low Countries—two chambers, if chambers they could be called, quite remote from the rest of the house, low ceilings, strange scraps of many-coloured

paper on the walls, an old camp bed, a feather bed with half the feathers out; one window, low, but wide.

"'Out of that window,' said my aunt, 'as Isabella told us, the corpse was carried.'

"'Who is Isabella?' cried I; but before my aunt could answer I was struck with new wonder at the sight of two French looking-glasses, in gilt frames, side by side, reaching from the ceiling to the floor, and placed exactly opposite the bed![1]

"I was now so tired that I could neither see, hear, or understand, imagine, or wonder any longer. Sophy somehow managed to get my clothes off, and literally put me into bed. The images of all these people and things flitted before my eyes for a few seconds, and then I was fast asleep.

"Mrs. and Miss Fortescue came in the morning, and among other things mentioned the fancy ball in Dublin. Mrs. Sheridan[2] was the handsomest woman there. The Duchess of Bedford was dressed as Mary Queen of Scots, and danced with Lord Darnley. At supper the Duchess *motioned* to Lady Darnley to come to her table; but Lady Darnley refused, as she had a party of young ladies. The Duchess reproached her rather angrily. 'Oh,' said Lady Darnley, 'when the Queen of Scots was talking to Darnley, it would not have done for me to have been too near them.'"

[1] This mysterious apartment had belonged to a poor crazed lady who died there, and who had, as Isabella, the gardener's wife, related, a passion for fine papers, different patterns of which were put on the walls to please her, and also the French mirrors, on which she delighted to look from her bed. And when she died her coffin was, to avoid the crooked passages, taken out of the window.

[2] Mrs. Tom Sheridan. She had been at Edgeworthstown this winter.

Mrs. Edgeworth to Miss Sophy Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, April* 13, 1806.

"My dear Sophy,

"We were at Gaybrook when your letter came, and when the good news of Miss Pakenham's happiness arrived: it was announced there in a very pleasant, sprightly letter from your friend Miss Fortescue. Your account of the whole affair is really admirable, and is one of those tales of real life in which the romance is far superior to the generality of fictions. I hope the imaginations of this hero and heroine have not been too much exalted, and that they may not find the enjoyment of a happiness so long wished for, inferior to what they expected. Pray tell dear good Lady Elizabeth we are so delighted with the news, and so engrossed by it, that, waking or sleeping, the image of Miss Pakenham swims before our eyes. To make the romance perfect we want two material documents—a description of the person of Sir Arthur, and a knowledge of the time when the interview after his return took place.

"Only think of poor Boyce[1] having been employed to establish a line of telegraphs from Bombay to Madras! He writes gratefully and sensibly about it."

Maria continues.

"How glad I am that you will have the delightful pleasure of being with Miss Pakenham! I love her

[1] A young man, brother-in-law to one of Mr. Edgeworth's tenants, who had been employed by my brother to work Mr. Edgeworth's telegraph, and who was now in a merchant's house at Bombay.

most sincerely, and I cannot tell you how grateful I feel to Lady Longford for writing such a warm, kind letter to my father.

"Have you received—but I know you can think of nothing now but Kitty Pakenham."

Maria to Mrs. Edgeworth.

"*Allenstown, May-day,* 1806.

"Thank dear good Kitty for the lemonade; none but a thirsty, feverish soul as I was could tell the joy with which I found the bottle. A girl on the road who saw me with it to my mouth grinned from ear to ear. I am sure she thought it was whisky. Doctor Beaufort, tell Charlotte, saw Sir Arthur Wellesley at the Castle: handsome, very brown, quite bald, and a hooked nose. He could not travel with Lady Wellesley; he went by the mail. He had overstayed his leave a day. She travelled under the care of his brother, the Clergyman."

Maria to Miss Margaret Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, May* 23, 1806.

"I have been laughed at most unmercifully by some of the phlegmatic personages round the library table for my impatience to send you 'The Mine.' 'Do you think Margaret cannot live five minutes longer without it? Saddle the mare, and ride to Dublin, and thence to Black Castle or Chantony with it, my dear!'

"I bear all with my accustomed passiveness, and am rewarded by my father's having bought it for me; and it is now at Archer's for you. Observe, I think the

poem, as a drama, tiresome in the extreme, and absurd, but I wish you to see that the very letters from the man in the quicksilver mine which you recommended to me have been seized upon by a poet of no inferior genius. Some of the strophes of the fairies are most beautifully poetic.

"Lady Elizabeth Pakenham told us that when Lady Wellesley was presented to the Queen, Her Majesty said, 'I am happy to see you at my court, so bright an example of constancy. If anybody in this world deserves to be happy, you do.' Then Her Majesty inquired, 'But did you really never write *one* letter to Sir Arthur Wellesley during his long absence?' 'No, never, madam.' 'And did you never think of him?' 'Yes, madam, very often.'

"I am glad constancy is approved of at courts, and hope 'the bright example' may be followed."

To Miss Sophy Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, July* 12, 1806.

"This is the third sheet of paper in the smallest hand I could write I have had the honour within these three days to spoil in your service, stuffed full of geological and chemical facts, which we learned from our two philosophical travellers, Davy and Greenough; but when finished I persuaded myself they were not worth sending. Many of the facts I find you have in Thomson and Nicholson, which, 'owing to my ignorance,' as poor Sir Hugh Tyrold would say, 'I did not rightly know.'

"Our travellers have just left us, and my head is in great danger of bursting from the multifarious treasures

that have been stowed and crammed into it in the course of one week. Mr. Davy is wonderfully improved since you saw him at Bristol: he has an amazing fund of knowledge upon all subjects, and a great deal of genius. Mr. Greenough has not, at first sight, a very intelligent countenance, yet he *is* very intelligent, and has a good deal of literature and anecdote, foreign and domestic, and a taste for wit and humour. He has travelled a great deal, and relates well. Doctor Beddoes is much better, but my father does not think his health safe. I am very well, but shamefully idle: indeed, I have done nothing but hear; and if I had had a dozen pair extraordinary of ears, and as many heads, I do not think I could have heard or held all that was said.

"I have looked over a second time—I had read—Sir John Davies, on your recommendation, and have found several things that will be useful to me. Mrs. Tuite says she hears from London that 'Leonora' is not nearly as much liked as 'Popular Tales.' She likes it extremely herself, so do not let my aunt be angry with her: I must try and do something better. Have you seen or heard anything of a poem called 'Psyche,' printed, but not published, by Mrs. Henry Tighe? I am told that it is beautiful. Have you seen Mrs. Opie's 'Simple Tales?'"

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Dec.*, 1806.

"The meeting between Charlotte and Henry was not so melancholy as I had feared. He has recovered his looks wonderfully, and he did not seem to think nearly so badly of her as I expected. She looks terribly like

her poor mother, and my father's manner of speaking of her alarms me more than I can tell."

To Miss Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Feb.*, 1807.

"While Charlotte was pretty well we paid our long-promised visit to Coolure, and passed a few very pleasant days there. Admiral Pakenham is very entertaining, and appears very amiable in the midst of his children, who doat on him. He spoke very handsomely of your darling brother, and diverted us by the mode in which he congratulated Richard on his marriage: 'I give you joy, my good friend, and I am impatient to see the woman who has made an honest man of you.'

"Colonel Edward Pakenham burned his instep by falling asleep before the fire, out of which a turf fell on his foot, and so he was, luckily for us, detained a few days longer and dined and breakfasted at Coolure. He is very agreeable, and unaffected, and modest, after all the flattery he has met with."

In the midst of our anxiety for Charlotte, we were disturbed by the state of the country: large parties of men went about attacking houses and seizing arms; they called themselves Thrashers, and we were roused one night by the sergeant of the yeomanry corps with the intelligence that the Thrashers were close to the town in great numbers. Lord Longford and Mr. Rennie, the engineer, had come that day. Mr. Rennie, when he was called up in the middle of the night, very naturally said this was a strange country, where a man could not sleep one night in peace! The Thrashers did not how-

ever come to the house, and except having the windows barricaded for some time and the yeomanry on guard, we had no further disturbance from them, but these alarms and our anxiety for Charlotte made this a melancholy spring. Her increasing illness occupied all our thoughts, and although for months we knew how it must end, the blow overwhelmed us when it came. She died the 7th April, 1807. Her genius, and her beauty, her guileless heart, her innocent gaiety, her never-ruffled temper, had made her the admiration of all who knew her—the idol and darling of her family. Her death cast a black cloud over this year.

Maria to Miss Sophy Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Aug.*, 1807.

"Mr. Hammond[1] cannot be with you till Friday. He leaves us happier and more in a way to settle to business than when he came. He is very benevolently intent on the education of a younger brother and sister, but much averse to going into partnership with his father, who is a plain man of business. We have done our utmost to persuade him that commerce and literature are quite compatible, and that variety of employment, and even irksome business, to which persons of ardent imagination are most averse, are absolutely necessary to keep the imagination in order, and to give elasticity to those powers which would be too much deadened and confined, &c.—Le sage entend à demi mot. I have received an answer from M. Dumont: he

[1] Mr. Hammond was an interesting young gentleman, a London acquaintance of Sneyd's.

cannot come. The outside of the library looks remarkably pretty since it has been painted and jointed to look like Portland stone."

The library had been enlarged this year by breaking through the very thick old outside wall, leaving two square pillars beyond which an addition was built.

Mr. Edgeworth also at this time laid out for Maria a garden, at the west end of the house, close to a new greenhouse built to match the addition to the library and opening into my dressing-room. Maria had before had a very pretty garden in an old quarry, but it was at some distance from the house, and the planting and arranging of her new territory, which she looked upon from the window of her own room, was a source of great pleasure to her.

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Sept.*, 1807.

"My beloved Aunt and friend—friend to my least fancies as well as to my largest interests,—thank you for the six fine rose-trees, and thank you for the little darling double-flowering almond-tree. Sneyd asked if there was nothing for him? so I very generously gave him the polyanthuses and planted them with my own hands at the corners of his garden pincushions.

"I am glad Mr. Hammond blew out so well at Black Castle. He may satisfy himself as to the union of commerce and literature by simply reading the history of the Medici, where commerce, literature, and the arts made one of the most splendid, useful, and powerful coalitions that ever were seen in modern times. Here is a fine

sentence! Mr. Hammond once, when piqued by my raillery, declared that he never in his life saw, or could have conceived, till he saw me, that a *philosopher* could laugh so much and so heartily.

"Enclosed I send a copy of an epitaph written by Louis XVIII., on the Abbé Edgeworth; I am sure the intention does honour to H. M. heart, and the critics here say the Latin does honour to H. M. head. When my uncle has seen it will you send it with my respects to Dr. Plunkett?[1] it is the only acknowledgment I can make for his polite and sensible letter to me, and for his kindness in lending his books to me, of which I will take the greatest care. William Beaufort, who sent it to my father, says the epitaph was communicated to him by a physician at Cork, who being a Roman Catholic of learning and foreign education, maintains a considerable correspondence in foreign countries."

Miss Honora Edgeworth to Miss Ruxton.

"*December,* 1807.

"I must tell you, my dear Sophy, the pleasure I have enjoyed in our visit at Pakenham Hall. All the admiration which I felt for Miss Fortescue was increased by seeing her again in a new place with different people. A little while after we arrived, we heard some bustle in the house, but concluded it was Mrs. Parkinson Ruxton arriving, when Lady Longford, who had not yet seen us, rushed into the room, took no

[1] Doctor Plunkett, titular Bishop of Meath, a near neighbour of Mrs. Ruxton's.

notice of any of us, but pushed forward to Lady Elizabeth and exclaimed, 'Here is a gentleman that wants to speak to you.' At this instant there entered the room a young gentleman like Lord Longford, and very like Miss Pakenham, who ran up to Lady Elizabeth and embraced her: this was Mr. Hercules Pakenham, whom none of his friends had seen since his exploits at Copenhagen, and who had not been at Pakenham Hall for five years. You may imagine what delight his coming gave rise to, and how eagerly his friends looked at him from head to foot, to see what alteration there was in his appearance."

Maria to Henry Edgeworth,
in London.

"*Pakenham Hall,*
"*Christmas-day,* 1807.

"A merry Christmas to you, my dear Henry and Sneyd! I wish you were here at this instant, and you would be sure of one; for this is really the most agreeable family and the pleasantest and most comfortable castle I ever was in.

"We came here yesterday—the *we* being Mr. and Mrs. Edgeworth, Honora, and M. E. A few minutes after we came, arrived Hercules Pakenham—the first time he had met his family since his return from Copenhagen. Lady Longford is a charming woman, and it is a delightful thing to see her in the midst of her family.

"Half-an-hour after the arrival of Hercules had subsided, came Mr. and Mrs. Parkinson Ruxton, to complete the measure of happy friends; and they asked so kindly for you, and took occasion to tell me how much

you were regretted by the poor as well as the rich at Rosstrevor.

"Now to return to Hercules Pakenham. My father has scarcely ever quitted his elbow since he came, and has been all ear and no tongue. Hercules has given a full account of all their proceedings in that piratical expedition. The town would not have been bombarded at all if Colonel Edward Pakenham's advice had been taken: the Colonel viewed the town carefully, and discovered a pass through a range of gardens, by which he could have *filed* in all the troops by night, and there could have been no resistance. Was not this enough to excite indignation? *but*, as Lady Longford says, the Colonel might have lost his life if he had conducted the attack.

"The Danish General Peyman, a gallant old man, came and sat in his chair at the works: he could not stand, having been wounded in the leg. One fine church and *one* of the fine libraries were destroyed; but (in spite of the newspapers) the National Library and the Observatory escaped: Observatory stood after receiving three balls—*elastic*, and so escaped.

"The yards and magazines Captain Pakenham describes as orderly and magnificent in their treasures beyond imagination: for ten days our troops employed five hundred horses and eight thousand men every day in carrying away the shipping, rigging, sea stores, and ammunition of all kinds. I write the numbers in words, lest you should think I mistook a nought in the numeration. The noise of the seamen and troops shouting and hallooing at everything they found—the blows of the men taking to pieces some half-finished vessels, to bring them to England—the horses trampling, the ammuni-

tion carts rolling, you may, perhaps, imagine; but Captain Pakenham said it was impossible to conceive it without hearing it. In the immense dockyard everything was found in the most precise order; every rope, every sail, every the minutest article numbered and labelled for the ship to which it belonged; the cartridges made up, to every gun its charge. This labelling Captain P. says he is sure will be imitated in our navy—good in everything.

"But with what indignation the Danes must have beheld this scene! And how they must hate the English for ever and ever and ever! Yet, strange to tell, and impossible almost to believe, these people either concealed their hatred so well, from fear, or felt so little, from stupidity, that in a country town where Captain Pakenham gave a ball to the inhabitants, all that could be stowed into the room flocked to it; and some of our men who were taken prisoners were paid a shilling a day, and allowed to pleasure themselves all over Copenhagen! Great magnanimity, or great want of feeling.

"Captain Pakenham went with Sir Arthur Wellesley on the expedition up the country: saw much of the people—long-haired, sulky, comfortably clothed and housed, coarsely fed on black and *blue* bread, corn, and milk; some potatoes. Cattle plenty, but sheep wee-wee; fourteen pounds a good sheep—three or four at a dinner. Such abundance of horses and carts, that all his regiment were carried. Put in requisition fifteen hundred thousand rations of oats: gave tickets of receipt to the peasants, all paid for by Lord Cathcart. The first peasant whose oats were seized took the receipt, which was to entitle him to payment, with sulky incredulity; but when he found that he actually got

the money, the country people flocked in with their oats in astonishing quantities. Upon the whole he said these people appeared to him as happy, if not happier, than any peasantry he ever saw, but in a phlegmatic way. He thought them stupid, but this, I think, arose from fear, and from his not understanding their language. When he first landed under the fortress of Cronberg, the country people were coming from Church, and they gazed at them with an air of stupefaction; some passed through our ranks, some sat down to look at them at their ease, some took out of their pockets eatables, and ate and stared; some crossed their hands upon their bosoms and bowed low, offering their watches to the officers as propitiatory sacrifices. All well clothed, the women in particular, wearing a surprising number of petticoats: he counted on one half-a-dozen borders, red, green, blue, and yellow. Few luxuries, even in the best houses in Copenhagen: excellent eating at the hotels, and plenty of French wines.

"Lady Wellesley was prevented by engagements from joining this party at Pakenham Hall; both the Duke and Duchess of Richmond are so fond of her as no tongue can tell. The Duke must have a real friendship for Sir Arthur; for while he was at Copenhagen his grace did all the business of his office for him."

To C. Sneyd Edgeworth,
in London.

"*Edgeworthstown, Jan.* 1, 1808.

"A happy new year to you, my dear Sneyd. It is so dark, I can hardly see to write, and it has been pouring such torrents of rain, hail, and snow, that I

began to think, with John Langan, that the 'old prophecies found in a bog' were all accomplishing, and that Slievegaulry was beginning to set out[1] on its proposed journey. My mother has told you about these predictions, and the horror they have spread through the country *entirely*. The old woman who was the cause of the mischief is, I suppose, no bigger than a midge's wing, as she has never been found, though diligent search has been made for her. Almost all the people in this town sat up last night to *receive* the earthquake.

"We have had the same physiognomical or character-telling *fishes* that you described to Honora. Captain Hercules Pakenham brought them from Denmark, where a Frenchman was selling them very cheap. Those we saw were pale green and bright purple. They are very curious: my father was struck with them as much, or more, than any of the children; for there are some wonders which strike in proportion to the knowledge, instead of the ignorance, of the beholders. Is it a leaf? Is it galvanic? What is it? I wish Henry would talk to Davy about it. The fish lay more quiet in my father's hand than could have been expected; only curled up their tails on my aunt Mary's; tolerably quiet on my mother's; but they could not lie still one second on William's, and went up his sleeve, which I am told their German interpreters say is the worst sign they can give. My father suggested that the different degrees of dryness or moisture in the

[1] An old woman had, before Christmas, gone about the neighbourhood, saying that, on New Year's day, Slievegaulry, a little hill about five miles from Edgeworthstown, would come down with an earthquake, and settle on the village, destroying everything.

hands cause the emotions of these sensitive fish, but after *drying* our best, no change was perceptible. I thought the pulse was the cause of their motion, but this does not hold, because my pulse is slow, and my father's very quick. It was ingenious to make them in the shape of fish, because their motions exactly resemble the breathing, and panting, and floundering, and tail-curling of fish; and I am sure I have tired you with them, and you will be sick of these fish."

It was afterwards ascertained that these conjuring fish had been brought from Japan by the Dutch, and were made of horn cut extremely thin. Their movements were occasioned, as Mr. Edgeworth supposed, from the warm moisture of the hand, but depended upon the manner in which they were placed. If the middle of the fish was made to touch the warmest part of the hand, it contracted, and set the head and tail in motion.

To Miss Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Jan.* 23, 1808.

"I cannot in conscience let this frank go without a line to you. I will tell you how 'Professional Education' goes on, which, as it is the object of my waking and sleeping thoughts, I know by sympathy must be interesting to you.

"*Clergymen* has been entirely re-written, and I hope, as papa and mamma both think so, it has been improved: I have about seventeen pages of the said chapter to copy.

"*Country Gentlemen:* done. I think tolerable, no-

thing brilliant: gone to Lord Selkirk, who begged to keep it a fortnight that he might first get a pamphlet of his own out of his head, which, as it is on the state of the country, must be published before the meeting of Parliament. Besides this chapter Lord Selkirk has that on *Statesmen*, diplomatists, &c. This, I think, is 'ce que j'ai fait de moins mal,' as Madame de Genlis said.

"*Education of Princes* has been with Mr. Keir, and has his approbation strongly, except in one point, which we shall alter: it will take me three days to make that alteration.

"*Lawyers:* totally re-written. It has been with Judge Fox, and has received his unqualified approbation. I wish Richard could read it before it goes to press; and this was one reason why I wished to go to Gaybrook, for I would have taken it with me, and would have got him to sit up half a night to read it: I know he would do that, and more, for his old friend Maria.

"*Military Education:* corrected since its return from Mr. Keir; story of Captain Spike taken out, in consequence of Mr. Keir's objections to it as too *softening*, and a better story, from the Life of Bertrand du Guesclin, which I read to you on the sofa, put in its stead.

"*Physician:* still to be done. This is the only one we have to do except the preliminary chapter, which is a mass of heterogenous stuff: must be entirely new formed—will be at least seventy pages. I shall have the whole time the rest of the book is printing to do this: because, though the *preliminary* chapter must *come* first, it may be printed last, by the common ingenious contrivance of paging it separately in Roman figures.

"I never thought this book would come so near to a conclusion. I am well repaid for all the labour this copying and correcting has cost me by seeing that my father is pleased with it, and thinks it a proof of affection and gratitude. I cannot help, however, looking forward to its publication and fate with an anxiety and apprehension I never felt before, for I consider that my father's credit is at stake!

"Anna was pleased with the handkerchief I worked for her, and Zoe was pleased with the workbox and housewife I sent her: now do you tell me you are pleased with

"Your affectionate

"MARIA."

To Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Feb.*, 1808.

"With what pleasure, my dearest aunt, I run to my little table to write to you, when I have anything to say that can give you pleasure. This minute we have finished reading a delightful packet from Bristol, which has completely relieved my poor father's heart about Sneyd and his measles.

"Mr. Keir's house at Hilltop has been burned down, and he is now forced to live in a little farmhouse, in which, however, he says he is perfectly contented. He told us this *incidentally* in one of the most polite and kind letters I ever read, which he wrote to my father on the chapter on the Education of Princes.

"We are reading out 'Gulliver's Travels' after dinner, to the great delight of the young folks. Tell me what you think of 'Corinne' and the 'Letters from the Moun-

tains,' neither of which we have seen; nor could I have had time to read, for I have done nothing but write. I have, however, followed your injunctions, and not tired myself. All alive and merry, and shall soon write FINIS; and then, heigh! for *your* story, dear aunt."

To Miss Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, April,* 1808.

"The moment 'Professional Education' was gone, the inflammation in poor papa's eyes came on, and, besides reading to him, he wanted in a great hurry to write an addition to an Essay on Wheel Carriages, which he gave to Mr. Greenough; the subject being actually before a Committee of the House of Commons, and Mr. Cummins and all the great engineers and all the great waggoners disputing, *à l'outrance* and *à gorge deployée,* about the comparative merits of cylindrical and conical wheels. So my father, being appealed to, was desirous to state the merits of the said wheels impartially, and he dictated to me, as he walked up and down the library for two hours, nine pages; and these nine pages had to be copied, and nine and nine you are sensible make eighteen, and it was the day I wrote those eighteen pages that I contrived to scrawl that letter to my aunt about Jack Langan.

"We have just had a charming letter from Mrs. Barbauld, in which she asks if we have read 'Marmion,' Mr. Scott's new poem: we have not. I have read 'Corinne' with my father, and I like it better than he does. In one word, I am dazzled by the genius, provoked by the absurdities, and in admiration of the taste and critical judgment of Italian literature dis-

played through the whole work. But I will not dilate upon it in a letter; I could talk of it for three hours to you and my aunt. I almost broke my foolish heart over the end of the third volume, and my father acknowledges he never read anything more pathetic.

"I am every morning trying to draw the little weeping Cupid you desired for your portfolio. Pray remember my garden when the Beauforts come to us. It adds very much to my happiness, especially as Honora and all the children have shares in it, and I assure you it is very cheerful to see the merry, scarlet-coated, busy little workwomen in their territories, sowing, and weeding, and transplanting hour after hour."

"*June* 4.

"Lady Elizabeth Pakenham and Mrs. Stewart and her son Henry, a fine intelligent boy, and her daughter Kitty, who promises to be as gentle as her mother, have been here. I liked Mrs. Stewart's conversation much, and thought her very interesting.

"My aunt has just forwarded to me a letter she received in a frank from Henry and Sneyd. It had been directed to me at Mr. Johnson's, and whom do you think it was from? No less a person than Mrs. John Nettleby, who writes to inquire if her friends Mr. and Mrs. Bolingbroke were ever reconciled? I shall answer that 'nobody can know so well as Mrs. John Nettleby herself.' Have you read the 'Siège de la Rochelle?'"

"*June* 9.

"My father and mother have gone to the Hills to settle a whole clan of tenants whose leases are out, and who *expect that because* they have all lived under his

Honour, they and theirs these hundred years, that his Honour shall and will contrive to divide the land that supported ten people amongst their sons and sons' sons, to the number of a hundred. And there is Cormac with the reverend locks, and Bryan with the flaxen wig, and Brady with the long brogue, and Paddy with the short, and Terry with the butcher's-blue coat, and Dennis with no coat at all, and Eneas Hosey's widow, and all the Devines pleading, and quarrelling about boundaries and bits of bog. I wish Lord Selkirk was in the midst of them, with his hands crossed before him; I should like to know if he could make them understand his Essay on Emigration.

"My father wrote to Sir Joseph Banks to apply through the French Institute for leave for Lovell to travel as a *literate* in Germany, and I have frequently written about him to our French friends; and those passages in my letters were never answered. All their letters are now written, as Sir Joseph Banks observed, under evident constraint and fear."

This summer of 1808 Mr. and Mrs. Ruxton and their two daughters passed some time with us. My father, mother, and sister came also, and Maria read out "Ennui" in manuscript. We used to assemble in the middle of the day in the library, and everybody enjoyed it. One evening when we were at dinner with this large party, the butler came up to Mr. Edgeworth. "Mrs. Apreece, sir; she is getting out of her carriage." Mr. Edgeworth went to the hall door, but we all sat still laughing, for there had been so many jokes about Mrs. Apreece, who was then travelling in Ireland, that we thought it was only nonsense of Sneyd's, who we

supposed had dressed up some one to personate her; and we were astonished when Mr. Edgeworth presented her as the real Mrs. Apreece. She stayed some days, and was very brilliant and agreeable. She continued, as Mrs. Apreece and as Lady Davy, to be a kind friend and correspondent of Maria's.

To Miss Ruxton.

"*Sept.*, 1808.

"A letter to Mr. North is on the chimney-piece, so I suppose he and his nephew, Mr. Douglas, will soon be here. Pray read 'Elizabeth,' by Madame Cottin; the character of the heroine is noble. Our good Bishop of Elphin[1] breakfasted here the day before yesterday—excellent, plainspoken, original man. My father and William will pay him a visit, to meet Dr. Brinkley. I take it for granted that Bess Waller told you that I had heard from Mrs. Alison of the safe arrival of the gowns, and that they are liked. My head is in a whirl, as it has been just determined that Henry sets off to-day. He is gone, and in all the hurry of his departure he regretted not being able to go by Black Castle. He took little Tom Beddoes with him—a good, intelligent little fellow, and we are all very sorry to lose him."

To Miss Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Dec.*, 1808.

"As we were coming home from Castle Forbes last Wednesday, about six o'clock in the evening, just as we came into Edgeworthstown, we saw an astonishingly

[1] Dr. Law, the friend of Paley.

bright light which made us all exclaim. We thought it was a torch or squib from one of the houses, but Patt, who saw better, said it was a ball of fire above our heads which burst and spread this light.

"I am glad I had strength of mind enough to make your portfolio such as you wished, and thank you for setting such undue value upon my little Cupid, and for so courteously giving him up to papa.

"We expect Mrs. O'Beirne and her Lord Bishop here every minute, and I seize the interim to write. I have re-written the two first chapters of 'Vivian,' and think it improved. I have put both my head and shoulders to the business, and if I don't make a good story of it, it shall not be for want of pains. Comedy? You must wait a great while before I have leisure even to think of it, and in the mean time I must go and dress.

"We had a very agreeable letter from Sneyd, from Glasgow; he has seen all Henry's friends there, and they have been so kind to him, and he finds their society so agreeable that he will stay there some days."

To C. Sneyd Edgeworth,
at Edinburgh.

"*Edgeworthstown, Dec.* 30, 1808.

"How little we can tell from day to day what will happen to us or our friends. I promised you a merry frankful of nonsense this day, and instead of that we must send you the melancholy account of poor Doctor Beddoes' death. He died as easily, mind and body, as his best friends could desire. The day before he died he was amusing himself with reading. I enclose Emmeline's letter, which will tell you all better than I can.

Poor Anna! how it has been possible for her weak body to sustain her through such trials and such exertions, God only knows. My father and mother have written most warm and pressing invitations to her to come here immediately, and bring all her children. How fortunate it was that little Tom came here last summer, and how still more fortunate that the little fellow returned with Henry to see his poor father before he died."

To Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Jan.* 4, 1809.

"My beloved Aunt,

"Can you conceive it possible that it was really a relief to me to find it was only your arm that was broken? I never was so shocked in my life as at the first words I read of dear Sophy's letter, the sight quite left my eyes, and when I could go on I was relieved by finding it no worse: I am more anxious than I can tell you to know which arm it is, but yet hardly dare to hope it was the left. I think you were stretching out your right arm for the picture and fell back upon your left. O, my dear aunt, what a mercy that it is no worse, such a beginning of the new year as this has been to us!"

To Miss Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Jan.* 5, 1809.

"You dear, good Sophy,

"You cannot conceive—yet you are one of the few persons who can conceive, how much we are obliged to you for writing so constantly.

"Which picture was it that my aunt was reaching to? It is an idle question. When we told John Langan of the accident, after he had lamented some time, 'But what business had she to be getting up that way upon them out-o'-the-way places? But that's the way with yees all, and its kind brother for her—and I'll engage it was to do a civility anyhow to somebody or other. Well, blessed be GOD, it was no worse.'"

To Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Jan.*, 1809.

"On Friday we went to Pakenham Hall. We sat down thirty-two to dinner, and in the evening a party of twenty from Pakenham hall went to a grand ball at Mrs. Pollard's. Mrs. Edgeworth and I went, papa and Aunt Mary stayed with Lady Elizabeth. Lord Longford acted his part of Earl Marshal in the great hall, sending off carriage after carriage, in due precedence, and with its proper complement of beaux and belles. I was much entertained: had Mrs. Tuite, and mamma, and Mrs. Pakenham, and the Admiral to talk and laugh with: saw abundance of comedy. There were three Miss ——s, from the County of Tipperary, three degrees of comparison, the positive, the comparative, and the superlative; excellent figures, with white feathers as long as my two arms joined together, stuck in the front of what were meant for Spanish hats. How they towered above their sex, divinely vulgar, with brogues of true Milesian race! Supper so crowded that Caroline Pakenham and I agreed to use one arm by turns, and thus with difficulty found means to reach our mouths. Caroline grows upon me every time I see her;

she is as quick as lightning, understands with half a word, literary allusions as well as humour, and follows and leads in conversation with that playfulness and good breeding which delight the more because they are so seldom found together. We stayed till between three and four in the morning. Lord Longford had, to save our horses which had come a journey, put a pair of his horses and one of his postillions to our coach: the postillion had, it seems, amused himself at a *club* in Castle Pollard while we were at the ball, and he had amused himself so much that he did not know the ditch from the road: he was ambitious of passing Mr. Dease's carriage—passed it: attempted to pass Mr. Tuite's, ran the wheels on a drift of snow which overhung the ditch, and laid the coach fairly down on its side in the ditch. We were none of us hurt. The *us* were my mother, Mr. Henry Pakenham, and myself. My mother fell undermost; I never fell at all, for I clung like a bat, to the handstring at my side, determined that I would not fall upon my mother and break her arm. I had your arm, dearest aunt, before my eyes, at the instant I felt the coach going over. None of us even bruised. Luckily Mrs. Tuite's carriage was within a few yards of us, and stopped, and the gentlemen hauled us out immediately. Admiral Pakenham lifted me up and carried me in his arms, as if I had been a little doll, and set me down actually on the step of Mrs. Tuite's carriage, so I never wet foot or shoe. And now, my dear aunt, I have established a character for courage in overturns for the rest of my life! The postillion was not the least hurt, nor the horses; if they had not been the quietest animals in the world, we should have been undone: one was found with his feet level with the

other's head. The coach could not be got out of the deep ditch that night, but Lord Longford sent a man to sleep in it, that nobody else might, and that no one might steal the glasses. It came out safe and sound in the morning, not a glass broken. Miss Fortescue, Caroline, and Mr. Henry Pakenham, went up just as we left Pakenham Hall, to town, or to the Park to Lady Wellesley, who gives a parting ball, and then follows Sir Arthur to England."

To Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Feb.* 2, 1809.

"This minute I hear a carman is going to Navan, and I hasten to send you the 'Cottagers of Glenburnie,' which I hope you will like as well as we do. I think it will do a vast deal of good, and besides it is extremely interesting, which all *good* books are not: it has great powers, both comic and tragic. Mrs. Hutchinson's Memoirs too bulky for this man to pocket. I write in the midst of Fortescues and Pakenhams, with dear Miss Caroline P., whom I like every hour better and better, sitting on the sofa beside me, reading Mademoiselle Clairon's Memoirs, and talking so entertainingly, that I can scarcely tell what I have said, or am going to say.

"I like Mrs. Fortescue's conversation, and will, as Sophy desires, converse as much as possible with obliging and ever-cheerful Miss Fortescue. But indeed it is very difficult to mind anything but Caroline. I received dear Sophy's letter about the little play, and should wish extremely that it could be acted now, but it is absolutely impossible, as the actors are not yet at all perfect in their parts."

"*Feb.* 5.

"Three of the most agreeable days I ever spent we have enjoyed in the visit of our Pakenham Hall friends to us. How delightful it is to be with those who are sincerely kind and well bred: I would not give many straws for good breeding without sincerity, and I would give at any time ten times as much for kindness *with* politeness as for kindness without it. There is something quite captivating in Lady Longford's voice and manners, and the extreme vivacity of her countenance, and her quick change of feelings interested me particularly: I never saw a woman so little spoiled by the world. As for Caroline Pakenham, I love her. They were all very polite about the reading out of 'Emilie de Coulanges,' and took it as a mark of kindness from me, and not as an exhibition. Try to get and read the 'Life of Dudley Lord North,' of which parts are highly interesting. I am come to the Ambition in 'Marie de Menzikoff,' which I like much, but the love is mere brown sugar and water. The mother's blindness is beautifully described. My father says 'Vivian' will stand next to 'Mrs. Beaumont' and 'Ennui;' I have ten days' more work at it, and then huzza! ten days' more purgatory at other corrections, and then a heaven upon earth of idleness and reading, which is my idleness. Half of 'Professional Education' is printed. Why do you say nothing of Anna's letters? you must like them. I have sent my *head* to my aunt by Mrs. Fortescue."

This head was the frontispiece to a magazine, a buxom young lady, tall and large, and totally unlike Maria,

though "Miss Maria Edgeworth" was at the foot of the print: she wrote beneath it,

"O, says the little woman, this is none of I."

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, March,* 1809.

"Indeed you are quite right in thinking that the expressions of affection from my uncle and you are more delightful to me than all the compliments or admiration in the world could be. It is no new thing for me to be happy at Black Castle, but I think I was particularly happy there this last time. You both made me feel that I added to the pleasures of your fireside, which after all, oldfashioned or not, are the best of all pleasures. How I did laugh! and how impossible it is not to laugh in some company, or to laugh in others. I have often wondered how my ideas flow or ebb without the influence of my will; sometimes when I am with those I love, flowing faster than tongue can utter, and sometimes ebbing, ebbing, till nought but sand and sludge are left.

"We have been much entertained with 'Le petit Carilloneur.' I would send it to you, only it is a society book; but I do send by a carman two volumes of 'Alfieri's Life' and 'Kirwan's Essay on Happiness,' and the Drogheda edition of 'Parent's Assistant,' which with your leave I present to your servant Richard.

"'The Grinding Organ'[1] went off on Friday night better than I could have expected, and seemed to please the spectators. Mrs. Pakenham brought four children,

[1] Afterwards published in 1827 in a small volume, entitled "Little Plays."

and Mr. and Mrs. Thompson two sons, Mr. and Mrs. Keating two daughters, which with the Beauforts, Molly, George, and the rest of the servants, formed the whole audience. I am sure you would have enjoyed the pleasure the Bristows showed on seeing and hearing Mary Bristow perform her part, which she did with perfect propriety. Sophy and Fanny excellent, but as they were doomed to be the *good* children, they had not ample room and verge enough to display powers equal to the little termagant heroine of the night. William in his Old Man (to use the newspaper style) correct and natural. Mr. Edgeworth as the English Farmer, evinced much knowledge of true English character and humour. Miss Edgeworth, as the Widow Ross, 'a cursed scold,' was quite at home. It is to be regretted that the Widow Ross has no voice, as a song in character was of course expected; the Farmer certainly gave 'a fair challenge to a fair lady.' His Daniel Cooper was given in an excellent style, and was loudly encored."

"*April* 28.

"The Primate[1] was very agreeable during the two days he spent here. My father travelled with him from Dublin to Ardbraccan, and this reputed silent man never ceased talking and telling entertaining anecdotes till the carriage stopped at the steps at Ardbraccan. This I could hardly credit till I myself heard his Grace burst forth in conversation. The truth of his character gives such value to everything he says, even to his humorous stories. He has two things in his character which I

[1] Primate Stuart.

think seldom meet—a strong taste for humour, and strong feelings of indignation. In his eye you may often see alternately the secret laughing expression of humour, and the sudden open flash of indignation. He is a man of the warmest feelings, with the coldest exterior I ever saw—a master mind. I could not but be charmed with him, because I saw that he thoroughly appreciated my father."

Though Maria loved to tell only what would entertain or give pleasure in her letters, she often wrote pages of mere bulletins when there was illness in the house, and her distant friends were anxious. Many letters in this year 1809 were occupied with details of the progress of all her young brothers and sisters and the faithful Kitty Billamore in the measles, which had gone through most of the family.

To Miss Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, June,* 1809.

"A copy of 'Tales of Fashionable Life'[1] reached us yesterday in a Foster frank: they looked well enough,—not very good paper, but better than 'Popular Tales.' I am going to write a story called 'To-day,'[2] as a match for 'To-morrow,' in which I mean to show that Impatience is as bad as Procrastination, and the desire to do too much to-day, and to enjoy too much at present, is as bad as putting off everything to to-morrow. What

[1] The first set containing Ennui, Madame de Fleury, Almeria, the Dun, and Manœuvring, in three volumes. The paper was abominable.

[2] Never written.

do you think of this plan? Write next post, as I am going to write while my father is away a story for his birthday. My other plan was to write a story in which young men of all the different professions should act a part, like the 'Contrast' in higher life,[1] or the 'Freeman Family,' only without princes, and without any possible allusion to our own family. I have another sub-plan of writing 'Celebrina in search of a Husband,' without my father's knowing it, and without reading 'Cœlebs,' that I may neither imitate nor abuse it.

"I dare say you can borrow 'Powell's Sermons' from Ardbraccan or Doctor Beaufort; the Primate lent them to my father. There is a charge on the connection between merit and preferment, and one discourse on the influence of academical studies and a recluse life, which I particularly admire, and wish it had been quoted in 'Professional Education.'

"Mrs. Clifford has been here—benevolent and well bred: in the early part of her life she lived in Berkshire, and knew my father there.

"Mr. Holland, a grand-nephew of Mr. Wedgewood's, and son to a surgeon at Knutsford, Cheshire, and intended for a physician, came here in the course of a pedestrian tour—spent two days—very well informed. Ask my mother when she goes to you to tell you all that Mr. Holland told us about Mr. and Mrs. Barbauld and Mrs. Marcet, who is the author of Conversations on Chemistry—a charming woman, by his account."

This visit began the friendship of Maria with Sir Henry Holland and his family, from which she derived such very great happiness and advantage.

[1] Patronage.

To Miss Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Aug.* 22, 1809.

"I have just been reading 'Carleton's Memoirs,' and am in love with the captain and with his general, Lord Peterborough; and I have also been reading one of the worst-written books in the language, but it has both instructed and entertained me—Sir John Hawkins' Life of Johnson. He has thrown a heap of rubbish of his own over poor Johnson, which would have smothered any less gigantic genius.

"M. Dumont writes from Lord Henry Petty's, 'Nous avons lu en société à Bounds, Tales of Fashionable Life. Toute société est un petit théâtre. Ennui et Manœuvring ont eu un succès marqué, il a été très vif. Nous avons trouvé un grand nombre de dialogues du meilleur comique, c'est à dire de ceux où les personnages se developpent sans le vouloir, et sont plaisants sans songer à l'être. Il y a des scènes charmantes dans Madame de Fleury. Ne craignez pas les difficultés, c'est là où vous brillez.'"

"*October* 8.

"The Bog Commissioners, whom William has named 'the gentlemen of the Irish turf,' have graciously accepted of my father's services. My mother and her little son are admirably well this morning."

To Miss Honora Edgeworth.[1]

"*Nov.* 30.

"I must have seemed very ungrateful in not having sooner thanked you for your entertaining account of

[1] The Miss Sneyds and Honora spent this autumn and winter at Mr. Sneyd's, in Staffordshire.

your first ball. I envy—no, I don't envy you anything, but I sympathise in the pleasure of hearing Sir Brooke Boothby's conversation. I have sent for his Fables to —alas! that I must say it—Johnson's successor.[1]

"We have had a bevy of wits here—Mr. Chenevix, Mr. Henry Hamilton, Leslie Foster, and his particular friend Mr. Fitzgerald. Somebody asked if Miss White was a bluestocking. 'Oh yes, she is; I can't tell you how blue. What is bluer than blue?' '*Morbleu*,' exclaimed Lord Norbury. Miss White herself comes next week."

"*Dec.* 11.

"Among other things Miss White entertained my father with was a method of drawing the human figure, and putting it into any attitude you please: she had just learned it from Lady Charleville—or rather not learned it. A whole day was spent in drawing circles all over the human figure, and I saw various skeletons in chains, and I was told the intersections of these were to show where the centres of gravity were to be; but my gravity could not stand the sight of these ineffectual conjuring tricks, and my father was out of patience himself. He seized a sheet of paper and wrote to Lady Charleville, and she answered in one of the most polite letters I ever read, inviting him to go to Charleville Forest, and he will go and see these magical incantations performed by the enchantress herself.

"A nephew of Dr. Gregory's is in Dublin, and my father has written to ask him to spend the Christmas here. I have been wondrous busy packing books to be

[1] Johnson, the bookseller, the friend of so many distinguished writers, died in the summer of 1809.

bound, and arranging all the rest, and have lived upon the ladder, my father deploring the waste of time and the fatigue I underwent; and now the shelves, books and all, are in the most distinguished order."

Maria at this time not only arranged the books, but made an alphabetical catalogue, written in her most beautiful hand.

To Miss Ruxton.

"*December*, 1809.

"I have spent five delightful days at Sonna and Pakenham Hall. Mrs. Tuite's kindness and Mr. Chenevix's various anecdotes, French and Spanish, delighted us at Sonna; and you know the various charms both for the head and heart at Pakenham Hall.

"I have just been reading, for the fourth time, I believe, 'The Simple Story,' which I intended this time to read as a critic, that I might write to Mrs. Inchbald about it; but I was so carried away by it that I was totally incapable of thinking of Mrs. Inchbald or anything but Miss Milner and Doriforth, who appeared to me real persons whom I saw and heard, and who had such power to interest me, that I cried my eyes almost out before I came to the end of the story: I think it the most pathetic and the most powerfully interesting tale I ever read. I was obliged to go from it to correct 'Belinda' for Mrs. Barbauld, who is going to insert it in her collection of novels, with a preface; and I really was so provoked with the cold tameness of that stick or stone Belinda, that I could have torn the pages to pieces: and really, I have not the heart or the patience

to *correct* her. As the hackney coachman said, 'Mend *you!* better make a new one.'"

To Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Jan.*, 1810.

"I have had a very flattering and grateful letter from Lydia White; she has sent me a comedy of Kelly's, 'A Word to the Wise.' She says the Heiress is taken from it. Just about the same time I had a letter from Mrs. Apreece: she is at Edinburgh, and seems charmed with all the wits there; and, as I hear from Mr. Holland, the young physician who was here last summer, she is much admired by them. Mrs. Hamilton and she like one another particularly; they can never cross, for no two human beings are, body and mind, form and substance, more unlike. We thought Mr. Holland, when he was here, a young man of abilities—his letter has fully justified this opinion: it has excited my father's enthusiastic admiration. He says Walter Scott is going to publish a new poem; I do not augur well of the title, 'The Lady of the Lake.' I hope this lady will not disgrace him. Mr. Stewart has not recovered, nor ever will recover, the loss of his son: Mr. Holland says the conclusion of his lectures this season was most pathetic and impressive—'placing before the view of his auditors a series of eight and thirty years in which he had zealously devoted himself to the duties of his office; and gave the impression that this year would be the period of his public life.'

"I have had a most agreeable letter from my darling old Mrs. Clifford; she sent me a curiosity—a worked muslin cap, which cost sixpence, in tambour stitch,

done by a steam engine. Mrs. Clifford tells me that Mrs. Hannah More was lately at Dawlish, and excited more curiosity there, and engrossed more attention, than any of the distinguished personages who were there, not excepting the Prince of Orange. The gentleman from whom she drew 'Cœlebs' was there, but most of those who saw him did him the justice to declare that he was a much more agreeable man than Cœlebs. If you have any curiosity to know his name, I can tell you that—young Mr. Harford, of Blaize Castle.

"Thank you, Sophy, for your remarks on my advertisement for Mrs. O'Beirne: I wrote instantly to have it altered."

Mrs. O'Beirne was the lady who came with her husband and her little boy to call upon Maria at Newry. The little boy died soon after, and Mrs. O'Beirne had now lost her husband. She had still two little boys to support and educate, and Maria took the most energetic and unwearied pains to assist her in setting up a boarding school for girls at Newry, in which she was successful.

To Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Feb.*, 1810.

"My father has just had a letter from your good friend Sir Rupert George, who desires to be affectionately remembered to you and my uncle. His letter is in answer to one my father wrote to him about his clear and honourable evidence on this Walcheren business. Sir Rupert says: 'I must confess I feel vain in

receiving commendations from such a quarter. The situation in which I was placed was perfectly new to me, and I had no rule for the government of my conduct but the one which has, I trust, governed all my actions through life—to speak the truth, and fear not. Allow me on this occasion to repeat to you an expression of the late Mrs. Delaney's to me a few years before she died: 'The Georges, I knew, would always prosper, from their integrity of conduct. Don't call this flattery: I am too old to flatter any one, particularly a grand-nephew; and to convince you of my sincerity, I will add—for which, perhaps, you will not thank me—that there is not an ounce of wit in the whole family.'"

"'Oh how my sister would like to see this letter of Sir Rupert's!' said my father; and straightway he told, very much to Sophy and Lucy's edification, the history of his dividing with sister Peg the first peach he ever had in his life."

"*March* 2.

"Have you any commands to Iceland? My young friend Mr. Holland proposes going there from Edinburgh in April. Sir George Mackenzie is the chief mover of the expedition.

"This epigram or epitaph was written by Lord I-don't-know-who, upon *Doctor* Addington—Pitt's Addington—in old French:

'Cy dessous reposant
Le sieur Addington git:
Politique soi-disant,
Medecin malgrè-lui.'"

"*March* 19.

"The other day we had a visit from a Mrs. Coffy—no relation, she says, to your Mrs. Coffy. She looked

exactly like one of the pictures of the old London Cries. She came to tell us that she had been at Verdun, and had seen Lovell. From her description of the place and of him, we had no doubt she had actually seen him. She came over to Ireland to prove that some man who is a prisoner at Verdun, and who is a life in a lease, is not dead, but 'all alive, ho!' and my father certified for her that he believed she had been there. She knew nothing of Lovell but that he was well, and fat, and a very merry gentleman two years ago. She had been taken by a French privateer as she was going to see her sons in Jersey, and left Verdun at a quarter of an hour's notice, as the women were allowed to come home, and she had not time to tell this to Lovell, or get a letter from him to his friends. She was, as Kitty said, 'a comical body,' but very entertaining, and acted a woman chopping bread and selling 'un liv'—deux liv'—trois liv'—Ah, bon, bon,' as well as Molly Coffy[1] herself acted the elephant. She was children's maid to Mr. Estwick, and Mr. Estwick is, my father says, son to a Mr. Estwick who used to be your partner and admirer at Bath in former times!!"

Maria to C. Sneyd Edgeworth, in London.

"*Edgeworthstown, April,* 1810.

"We heard from Miss Hamilton the very day you wrote of Miss Alison's marriage, and rejoice at it.

"I do not like Lord Byron's 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers,' though, as my father says, the lines

[1] Mrs. Molly Coffy, for fifty years Mrs. Ruxton's housekeeper.

are very strong, and worthy of Pope and the Dunciad. But I was so much prejudiced against the whole by the first lines I opened upon about the 'paralytic muse' of the man who had been his guardian, and is his relation, and to whom he had dedicated his first poems, that I could not relish his wit. He may have great talents, but I am sure he has neither a great nor good mind; and I feel dislike and disgust for his Lordship."

To Miss Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, May*, 1810.

"Now I have to announce the safe arrival of my Aunts and Honora in good looks and good spirits. My father went to Dublin to meet them. I am sorry he did not see the Count de Salis,[1] but he was much pleased with Harriet Foster, which I am glad of; for I love her."

To Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, June* 21, 1810.

"My dearest Aunt and Friend,

"When shall we two meet again? This is a question which occurs to me much oftener than even you think, and it always comes into my mind when I am in any society I peculiarly like, or when I am reading any book particularly suited to my taste and feelings; and now it comes *à propos* to the Bishop of Meath

[1] The Count de Salis, just then going to be married to Miss Foster, daughter of Mr. Edgeworth's old friend and schoolfellow, the Bishop of Clogher.

and Mrs. O'Beirne and the 'Lady of the Lake.' By great good fortune, and by the good-nature of Lady Charlotte Rawdon, we had the 'Lady of the Lake' to read just when the O'Beirnes were with us. A most delightful reading we had; my father, the Bishop, and Mr. Jephson reading it aloud alternately. It is a charming poem: a most interesting story, generous, finely-drawn characters, and in many parts the finest poetry. But for an old prepossession—an unconquerable prepossession—in favour of the old minstrel, I think I should prefer this to either the 'Lay' or 'Marmion.' Our pleasure in reading it was increased by the sympathy and enthusiasm of our guests. We were very sorry to lose them: they are gone to Temple Michael, and we shall go to-morrow very civilly to pay a long-owing visit to Lady Kilkenny and Mrs. Bourke, but not to beg a dinner, ma'am! We have the note of invitation snug in our pockets.

"Have you read, or tried to read, Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse's three volumes of letters? and have you read Madame du Deffand? Some of the letters in her collection are very entertaining; those of the Duchesse de Choiseul, the Count de Broglie, Sir James Macdonald, and a few of Madame du Deffand's: the others are full of *fade* compliments and tiresome trifling, but altogether curious as a picture of that profligate, heartless, brilliant, and *ennuyed* society. There is in these letters, I think, a stronger picture of *ennui* than in Alfieri's life. Was his passion for the Countess of Albany, or for horses, or for pure Tuscan, the strongest? or did not he love NOTORIETY better than all three?

"I am glad you have had such pleasant days and delightful society at Farnham. Fanny, little Fanny,

has painted a cat on pasteboard, with a bird in her mouth, for the fruit-trees, in imitation of those we saw at Coolure—the best of scarecrows."

"*Sept.*, 1810.

"Sir Thomas and Lady Ackland spent a day here: he is nephew to my friend Mrs. Charles Hoare. He says he is twenty-three, but he looks like eighteen."

To Miss Ruxton.

"*Oct.*, 1810.

"By return of post, without fail, send me the length of my aunt's foot and half her leg, as far as a pair of half-boots reach, and say nothing to her, good, bad, or indifferent. Be very exact, for I have a charming opportunity of getting from England a new and divine kind of boots for her that *shall* keep her feet dry in all weather.

"You saw, I suppose, that Francis Beaufort was regularly posted. We have had a visit from Captain Pakenham, the admiral's son, this week: I like him. I was particularly pleased with his respectful manner to my father. He has some of his father's quickness of repartee, but with his *own* manner—no affectation of his father's style. We were talking of a Mrs. ——. 'What,' said I, 'is she alive still? The last time I saw her she seemed as if she had lived that one day longer by particular desire.' 'I am sure, then,' said Captain Pakenham, in a slow, gentle voice, 'I am sure, then, I cannot tell at *whose desire*.'

"I have been hard at work at Mrs. Leadbeater: I fear my notes are rubbish."

Mrs. Leadbeater, the quaker lady who lived at Ballitore, whose father had been tutor to Edmund Burke, and whose Letters have been lately published, wrote to Maria this year, asking her advice about a book she had written, "Cottage Dialogues," and sent the MS. to her. Mr. Edgeworth was so much pleased with it, that Maria offered, at Mr. Edgeworth's suggestion, to add a few notes, to give her name to the book; and it was published by Johnson's successor with great success.

Mr. Edgeworth, Maria, and I went this autumn to Kilkenny to see the amateur theatricals, with which we were much delighted. Mr. Edgeworth, who remembered Garrick, said he never saw such tragic acting as Mr. Rothe, in Othello: how true to nature it was, appeared from the observation of our servant, Pat Newman, who had never seen a play before: when Mr. Edgeworth asked him if he did not pity the poor woman smothered in bed, "It was a pity of her, but I declare I pitied the man the most." The town was full to overflowing, but we were most hospitably received, though our friends the O'Beirnes were their guests, by Doctor and Mrs. Butler. He had been a friend of Mr. Edgeworth's when he lived in the county of Longford, and she had been, when Miss Rothwell, a Dublin acquaintance of mine. This visit to Kilkenny was rich in recollections for Maria: the incomparable acting, the number of celebrated people there assembled, the supper in the great gallery of old grand Kilkenny Castle, the superb hospitality, the number of beautiful women and witty men, the gaiety, the spirit, and the brilliancy of the whole, could have been seen nowhere else.

To Miss Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Nov.*, 1810.

"My dear Sophy,

"We are to set out for Dublin on the 13th, to hear Davy's lectures. Lord Fingal was so kind as to come here yesterday with Lady Teresa Dease, and he told me that my uncle is gone to Dublin. Tell me everything about it clearly. Honora, Fanny, and William go with us."

We spent a few weeks in Dublin. "Davy's Lectures" not only opened a new world of knowledge to ourselves and to our young people, but were especially gratifying to Mr. Edgeworth and Maria, confirming, by the eloquence, ingenuity, and philosophy which they displayed, the high idea they had so early formed of Mr. Davy's powers.

During this short stay in Dublin we made many new acquaintances, and became intimate with the families of several gentlemen whom we had known before—Solicitor-General Bushe and his brother-in-law, Sir Philip Crampton; and at the Observatory we not only made the friendship of Dr. Brinkley's family, but met there Mr. Romney Robinson, then a very young man, just beginning his distinguished career.

To Miss Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, April*, 1811.

"I think Hardy's Life of Lord Charlemont interesting, and many parts written in a beautiful style; but I don't think he gives a clear, well-proportioned history

of the times. There is a want of *keeping* and perspective in it. The pipe of the man smoking out of the window is as high as the house. Mr. Hardy is more a portrait, than a history painter.

"If you have any curiosity to know the names of the writers of some of the articles in the 'Edinburgh Review,' I can tell you, having had to-day, from my literary intelligencer, Mr. Holland, two huge sheets, very entertaining and sensible. Jeffrey wrote the article on Parliamentary Reform, and that on the Curse of Kehama, Sidney Smith that on Toleration, and Malthus that on Bullion; and if you have any curiosity, I can also tell you those in the 'Quarterly,' among whom Canning is one. Thank my aunt for her information about Walter Scott; my father will write immediately to ask him here. I wish we lived in an old castle, and had millions of old legends for him. Have you seen Campbell's poem of O'Connor's Child? it is beautiful. In many parts I think it is superior to Scott.

"And now to drop down plump from heaven to earth: my father has just agreed to let his new inn to Mr. Bourne, the mail coach proprietor. I am sure Margaret will rejoice for me, for that inn did indeed fret me to an atomy."

"*May-Day.*

"My father is eagerly working at the model of the spire for Edgeworthstown Church: oh, will not my uncle come and see it put up? This being May-Day, one of the wettest I have ever seen, I have been regaled, not with garlands of May flowers, but with the *legal* pleasures of the season; I have heard of nothing but *giving notices to quit, taking possession, ejectments, flit-*

tings, &c. What do you think of a tenant who took one of the nice new houses in this town, and left it with every lock torn off the doors, and with a large stone, such as John Langan could not lift, driven actually through the boarded floor of the parlour? The brute, however, is rich, and if he does not die of whiskey before the law can get its hand into his pocket, he will pay for this waste.

"I have had another[1] odd letter signed by three young ladies, Clarissa Craven, Rachel Biddle, and Eliza Finch, who, after sundry compliments in very pretty language, and with all the appearance of seriousness, beg that I will do them the favour to satisfy the curiosity they feel about the wedding dresses of the Frankland family in the 'Contrast.' I have answered in a way that will stand for either jest or earnest; I have said that, at a sale of Admiral Tipsey's smuggled goods, Mrs. Hungerford bought French cambric muslin wedding gowns for the brides, the collars trimmed in the most becoming manner, as a Monmouth milliner assured me, with Valenciennes lace, from Admiral Tipsey's spoils. I have given all the particulars of the bridegrooms' accoutrements, and signed myself the young ladies' 'obedient servant and perhaps *dupe*.'

"I am going on with 'Patronage,' and wish I could show it to you. *Do* get 'O'Connor's Child,' Campbell's beautiful poem.

"Last Saturday there was the most violent storm of thunder and lightning I ever saw in Ireland, and once I thought I felt the ground shake under me, for which

[1] No less than five letters were received by Maria at different times, from different young people, asking for a description of the dresses in the "Contrast."

thought I was at the time laughed to scorn; but I find that at the same time the shock of an earthquake was felt *in the country, which shook Lissard House to its foundations.* I tell it to you in the very words in which it was told to me by Sneyd, who had it from Counsellor Cummin. A man was certainly killed by the lightning near Finae, *for* the said counsellor was knocked up at six o'clock in the morning, *to know* if there was to be a coroner's inquest.

"We have not heard from William, but of him, from Byrkely Lodge; his Aunt and Uncle Sneyd much pleased with him."

It was William's first visit to England, and he went to Mrs. Beddoes with a letter of introduction—"a young gentleman in whom we are interested." She had not seen him since he was an infant, and had not for a long time an idea who he was. Much struck by his handsome appearance and able conversation, she at last exclaimed, "You must be William!"

To Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, July,* 1811.

"Never shall my beloved aunt *thirst* for a letter from her little niece while she has the power to pour forth. My Aunt Charlotte no doubt told you that the day she and Aunt Mary and Honora returned from you we had had a course of visitors from 8 A.M. till 4 P.M., beginning with Judge Daly, who breakfasted with us, and who is a most agreeable, frank, well-bred man; three Miss Fetherstones, and Mr. and Mrs. Whitney, and Miss Godley, and Mr. and Mrs. Thompson of Clonfin,

Mrs. Bourke and her three daughters, and in the midst of the crowd came Mrs. O'Beirne of Newry, and a Miss West!

"Now please to walk with me to the spire, and see William standing on the scaffolding round the top of the church tower, which looks like the manned mast of a man-of-war. He gives the signal, and the four men at the corner capstans work the windlasses, and in a few moments, with a slow, majestic motion, the spire begins to ascend. Its gilt ball and arrow glitter higher and higher in the sun, and its iron skeleton rises by beautiful degrees, till, in twelve minutes and a half, its whole transparent form is high in air, and stands composed and sublime in its destined situation. Oh, how I wished you and my uncle had seen it! Cannot you come a month hence, when it will be slated, and will go up for the last time? Anna and her children are on their way here. We have heard from Scott: he cannot come here."

"*Aug.* 30.

"I have written a little play for our present large juvenile audience,[1] not for them to act, but to hear; I read it out last night, and it was liked. The scene is in Ireland, and the title 'The Absentee.' When will you let me read it to you? I would rather read it to you up in a garret than to the most brilliant audience in Christendom.

"Anna's children are very affectionate. Henry is beautiful, and the most graceful creature I ever saw. The eight children are as happy together as the day is long, and give no sort of trouble.

[1] Mrs. Beddoes and her three children were now with us.

"What book do you think Buonaparte was reading at the siege of Acre? 'Madame de Stael sur l'influence des Passions!' His opinion of her and of her works has wonderfully changed since then. He does not follow Mazarin's wise maxim, 'Let them *talk* provided they let me *act*.' He may yet find the recoil of that press, with which he meddles so incautiously, more dangerous than those cannon of which he well knows the management.

"Did my aunt tell you of Mrs. Mary Powys and her horrible maidservant, who used to lock her up at night and tell the people of the house that she was mad and slept in a straitwaistcoat, and then let in her lovers, &c.

"*Note Physical and Economical.*

"I am informed from high authority, that if you give Glauber's salts to hens, they will lay eggs as fast as you please!"

"*Sept.* 21.

"I write by the express injunctions of my father *three lines*, to tell you of the successful ascent of the spire, on the 19th. A fine calm bright day. Sixty guests invited to a collation. All assembled in the library about twelve o'clock: the company including, according to John Langan's triumphant calculation, five lords and one baronet. Mr. Keating politely offered the use of his garden,[1] where benches and chairs were arranged for the accommodation of the company; and the different groups, rich and poor, old and young, ugly and beautiful, were very picturesque, I believe, but I was too anxious to see anything but the

[1] The Vicarage garden adjoining the churchyard.

one object at that moment. The bugle sounded—dead silence, and the spire ascended with an easy, majestic motion, that calmed all hearts and delighted all eyes: when it had reached its full height, fifty feet, painted and sanded to a perfect imitation of Bath stone, a red streamer, which had been so contrived as to unfold itself, at that instant streamed in the wind, and gave notice that all was finished and safe.

"I never saw more judicious, friendly, affectionate kindness, than Lord Longford's; he was as anxious that the day should go off well as if it had been his brother's job, that is more than saying his own. But a truce to sentiment, and now if you please we walk home to breakfast. You know my mother's talents for these things, and aided by Anna (she arranged most beautifully, pyramids of grapes and peaches,) and good Mrs. Billamore, trust me, there was such a feast as gentles, and simples, and nobles approved in the most flattering manner. Two long tables down each side of the dining-room, the long table across the window, another table in the dressing-room, green-house doors open, geraniums, &c., pretty. All the old china in the house Anna had rummaged out, and varieties that would have charmed Mrs. O'Beirne were displayed. (N.B. Of nine dozen and seven china plates not one was broken on this occasion.) All seemed at ease, and pleased, and happy. We were fortunate indeed in having such a fine day: it began to rain violently in the evening, and to-day there has been a high gale of wind, but the spire has been so thoroughly bolted down and built into its tower, we have no fear that it can ever be stirred."

And there it has stood unshaken for fifty-three years.

Except a slate or two blown off in the hurricanes of 1821 and 1839, it has never sustained any injury.

To Miss Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Sept.*, 1811.

"We had a very pleasant dance at Mrs. Bourke's, and a prodigious party at Lord Sunderlin's, where we met Lord Cranley, who entertained me exceedingly."

Lord Cranley was at this time fifty-seven, and as his father was still alive, he boasted of being the 'oldest heir-apparent' in the world.

"*October.*

"Davy spent a day here last week, and was as usual full of entertainment and information of various kinds. He is gone to Connemara, I believe, to fish, for he is a little mad about fishing; and very ungrateful it is of me to say so, for he sent to us from Boyle the finest trout! and a trout of Davy's catching is I presume worth ten trouts caught by vulgar mortals. Sneyd went with him to Boyle, saw Lord Lorton's fine place, and spent a pleasant day. Two of Mr. Davy's fishing friends have since called upon us: Mr. Solly, a great mineralogist, and Mr. Children, a man of Kent.

"I am working away at 'Patronage,' but cannot at all come up to my idea of what it should be."

To Miss Sneyd.

"*Ardbraccan House, Nov.*, 1811.

"My dear Aunt Mary,

"Nothing worthy of note occurred on our journey to Pakenham Hall, where we found to our surprise

dear Lady Longford and Lord Longford, who had come an hour before on one of his flying visits, and a whole tribe of merry laughing children, Stewarts and Hamiltons. Lady Longford showed us a picture of Lady Wellington and her children; they are beautiful, and she says very like—Lady Wellington is not like: it is absurd to attempt to draw Lady Wellington's face; she has no *face*, it is all countenance. My father and Lady Elizabeth played at cribbage, and I was looking on: they counted so quickly fifteen two, fifteen four, that I was never able to keep up with them, and made a sorry figure. Worse again at some genealogies and intermarriages, which Lady Elizabeth undertook to explain to me, till at last she threw her arms flat down on each side in indignant despair, and exclaimed, 'Well! you are the stupidest creature alive!'

"When Lord Longford came in I escaped from cribbage and heard many entertaining things: one was of his meeting a man in the mail coach, who looked as if he was gouty, and seemed as if he could not stir without great difficulty, and never without the assistance of a companion, who never moved an inch from him. At last Lord Longford discovered that this *gentleman's* gouty overalls covered *fetters;* that he was a malefactor in irons, and his companion a Bow Street officer, who treated his prisoner with the greatest politeness. 'Give me leave, sir—excuse me—one on your arm and one on mine, and then we are sure we can't leave one another.'

"A worse travelling companion this than the bear, whom Lord Longford found one morning in the coach when day dawned, opposite to him—the gentleman in the fur cloak, as he had all night supposed him to be!

"Arrived at Ardbraccan in excellent time, and found a most kind and cordial reception."

To Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Nov.* 21, 1811.

"Anna is full of gratitude for all your kindness, and I thank you for being sure that it would give me pleasure. Sheridan has answered as I foresaw he *must*, that in the present state of this country the Lord Chamberlain would not *license* the 'Absentee;' besides, there would be a difficulty in finding actors for so many Irish characters. I like him all the better for being so *entirely* of my opinion."

This was the little play which she mentions in a former letter having read out for the amusement of the young people. Mr. Edgeworth was so delighted with it, that he determined to send it to Mr. Sheridan. It was copied in a single night: we all sat round the library table, and each taking a portion, it was completed by twelve o'clock in eight different handwritings. It afterwards made the groundwork and gave the title to her story of "The Absentee," into which she incorporated some of the characters of this little drama; but the idea of a family of Irish absentees living in London had originally formed part of "Patronage," where Lord and Lady Tipperary appeared as patients of Dr. Percy's. "Patronage" had at first been intended to have formed part of a second series of "Fashionable Tales," along with "Vivian" and "Emilie de Coulanges," but finding it impossible to finish it in two volumes, and Mr. Miles, Johnson's successor, being anxious to publish the second set of Tales for Fashionable Life

early the ensuing year, Mr. Edgeworth advised Maria to lay aside "Patronage" for the present, and taking out of it the Irish Absentees, make a story that would fill the volume and a half wanted for the series. She was pleased with the idea, wrote a sketch of the story, of which her father approved, changed the name of Tipperary to Clonbrony, and now set to work at "The Absentee."

To Mrs. Bannatyne.

"*Edgeworthstown, Dec.*, 1811.

"My dear Mrs. Bannatyne,

"Mrs. Moutray, and Mrs. de Lacy, and the Count and Countess de Salis, have written to their friends here in great delight at their tour in Scotland, and with much gratitude of the polite attentions they have received from your family. I think we shall have dear Henry[1] home in the spring, though he seems to like Madeira. Sneyd desires to be affectionately remembered to you, and particularly to Mrs. Stark, and do not omit to give my love to her. I wish I had time to write some more 'Early Lessons,' or to do half the things I wish to do. It is extremely gratifying to me to hear that those little books have been useful, and that they are favourites in your family. Have you seen a little book called 'Mary and her Cat?' It is not new, I believe it is almost out of print, but my sister Beddoes brought it to my youngest sister Lucy, who has actually learned to read well from the pleasure and curiosity it excited."

[1] Henry returned to England in very bad health, and died at Clifton, in 1813.

To Mrs. O'Beirne.[1]

"*Edgeworthstown, Dec.* 29, 1811.

"I have taken the liberty, my dear Mrs. O'Beirne, of enclosing under cover to the Bishop a note to Mrs. E. Hamilton, with a copy of the account of the Spire from 'Nicholson's Journal.'

"We all rejoice that you have enjoyed so much pleasure in your English excursion, and sympathize with you sincerely. How happy you must be in dear Edinburgh,—dear to me, and very dear, though I was there only for a few short days. Scott, from whom I have just heard, boasts of having seen and hopes to see much of you, and I have just told him that more judicious or more enthusiastic admirers of his poetry he can never see, and that he will never hear one thousandth part of the praises we have heard from all of you.

"I beg of you and Miss Wren, on my bended knee, pardon for my positiveness about Halifax. I have found your Halifax, which I persisted in thinking I had returned. Now triumph over me—revile me, put me to shame as I deserve. No, you will not; you will only say 'Poor Maria, I am sure, was more vexed about the loss of it than I was.'

"My Aunt Ruxton and all at Black Castle deplore your absence from Ardbraccan. Give my affectionate respects to the Bishop of Meath, and my love to Miss O'Beirne and Miss Wren. I must copy for Henrietta a little riddle a friend has just sent to us. I know that you are all, Bishop and all, so indulgent for every inno-

[1] The Bishop of Meath, with Mrs. O'Beirne and their family, were then at Edinburgh.

cent, playful jeu d'esprit, that I am not ashamed to send you a riddle. I would even send to my Lord Bishop a pun if I had a good one, and you would say, 'Oh, fie,' but you would smile, and then the 'Oh, fie,' goes for nothing."

Riddle enclosed.

"Am I able to tell you the word that I mean?
'Tis done, nothing more can be said,
Description is needless, the thing may be seen
As clearly as this may be read.
Yet lest you should wander for want of a clue,
My First is a part of To be;
My Second is never bestowed upon You,
Appropriate always to Me;
My Third is sufficient its part to fulfil,
And wisdom and power implies;
My Whole, like a gift of the fairy Goodwill,
Charms even the witty and wise."

To Miss Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Feb.* 19, 1812.

"I am glad my aunt had so agreeable a letter from Anna. I have just received one, which I would send, if I had a frank, but, alas! *packet* franks will now be difficult to obtain, for I hear of new regulations in the Post Office. My father has written to Lord Rosse to ask for permission for us to send MSS. free. 'Vivian' luckily is safe across the water. Two hundred and twenty pages of 'Absentee' done.

"'Thinks I to myself' made me laugh, and entertained me accordingly. I like very much a part of the book which many think stupid. Mr. Hargrave's travels with his pupil—*thinks I to myself* 'Professional Edu-

cation.' Just after reading it I met in an admirably entertaining old, old magazine borrowed from Lissard, 'Où Diable les livres vont-ils se fourrer?' an original letter from Sir Isaac Newton to a young friend going on his travels. It seemed as if Mr. Hargrave had just read it and adapted it to the year 1812."

"The Absentee" was written, the greater part of it, under the torture of the toothache; it was only by keeping her mouth full of some strong lotion that Maria could allay the pain, and yet though in this state of suffering she never wrote with more spirit and rapidity. Mr. Edgeworth advised the conclusion to be a letter from Larry, the postillion—he wrote one, and she wrote another, he much preferred hers, which is the admirable finale to "The Absentee."

To Miss Margaret Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, July* 20, 1812.

"I am heartily obliged to my dear Sophy—never mind, you need not turn to the direction, it *is* to Margaret, my dear, though it begins with thanks to Sophy —for being in such haste to relieve my mind from the agony it was in that 'Fashionable Tales' should reach my aunt. I cannot by any form of words express how delighted I am that you are none of you angry with me, and that my uncle and aunt are pleased with what they have read of 'The Absentee.' I long to hear whether their favour continues to the end and extends to the catastrophe, that dangerous rock upon which poor authors, even after a prosperous voyage, are wrecked, sometimes while their friends are actually hailing

them from the shore. I have the *Rosamond* vase[1] madness so strong upon me, that I am out of my dear bed regularly at half-past seven in the morning, and never find it more than half an hour till breakfast time, so happy am I daubing. On one side I have Ulysses longing to taste Circe's cakes, but saying 'No, thank you,' like a very good boy: and on the other side I have him just come home, and the old nurse washing his feet, and his queen fast asleep in her chair by a lamp, which I hope will not set her on fire, though it is, in spite of my best endeavours, so much out of the perpendicular that nothing but a miracle can keep it from falling on Penelope's crown.

"Little Pakenham is going on bravely (not two months old,) and I am just *beginning* to write again, and am *in* 'Patronage,' and have corrected all the faults you pointed out to me; and Susan, who was a fool, is now Rosamond and a wit.

"I suppose you have heard various jeux d'esprit on the marriage of Sir Humphry Davy and Mrs. Apreece? I scarcely think any of them worth copying: the best *idea* is stolen from the bon mot on Sir John Carr, 'The Traveller be*k*nighted.'

"'When Mr. Davy concluded his last Lecture by saying that we were but in the *Dawn* of Science, he probably did not expect to be so soon be*k*nighted.'

"I forget the lines: the following I recollect better.

"'To the famed widow vainly bow
Church, Army, Bar, and Navy;
Says she, I dare not take a vow,
But I will take my Davy.'

[1] A glass vase Maria painted for Mrs. Ruxton, in brown, from Flaxman's designs for the Odyssey; it was at night placed on a bracket, with a lamp inside, and was beautiful.

"Another my father thinks is better:

"'Too many men have often seen
Their talents underrated;
But Davy owns that his have been
Duly *Appreeciated*.'

"We have had a charming letter from Lady Wellington, when I can get a frank I will send it to you.

"Tell Miss Everard, Dr. Holland's father has returned the note of introduction to General Airey; he has changed his plans and gone to Spain."

"*Aug.* 22.

"I enclose a copy of Lovell's letter, which will give my dear aunt exquisite pleasure. His request to my father to pass him over, a prisoner and of precarious health, and make his next brother his heir, shows that if he has suffered he has at least had an opportunity of showing what he is. We shall do all we can to get at Talleyrand or some friend for his exchange. How happy Lady Wellington must be at this glorious victory. Had you in your paper an account of her *running* as fast as she could to Lord Bury at Lord Bathurst's when he alighted, to learn the first news of her husband! Vive l'enthousiasme! Without it characters may be very snug and comfortable in the world, but there is a degree of happiness which they will never taste, and of which they have no more idea than an oyster can have."

To Mrs. Edgeworth.

"*Black Castle, Oct.*, 1812.

"After a most delightful journey with Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hamilton, laughing, singing, and talking, we

dined with them.[1] Dear old Mr. Sackville Hamilton dined with us, fresh from London: intellectual and corporeal dainties in abundance. The first morning was spent in cursing Mr. Sadler for not going up, and in seeing the Dublin Society House. A charming picture of Mr. Foster, by Beachy, with plans in his hand, looking full of thought and starting into life and action. Spent an hour looking over the books of prints in the library. Fanny particularly pleased with a Houbracken: Harriet with Daniel's Indian Antiquities: my father with Sir Christopher Wren's and Inigo Jones's designs. After dinner Richard Ruxton came in, and said my aunt and uncle had thoughts of coming up to see the balloon. In the evening at Astley's. The second day to see the elephant: how I pitied this noble animal, cooped up under the command of a scarcely human creature, who had not half as much reason as himself. Went on to see the Panorama of Edinburgh: I never saw a sight that pleased me more; Edinburgh was before me—Princes Street and George Street—the Castle—the bridge over dry land where the woman met us and said, 'Poor little things they be.' At first a mistiness, like what there is in nature over a city before the sun breaks out; then the sun shining on the buildings, trees, and mountains.

"Thursday morning, to our inexpressible joy, was fine, and the flag, the signal that Sadler would ascend,

[1] Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton were paying us a visit, when the papers announced Mr. Sadler's intention of crossing the Channel in a balloon from Dublin. Mr. Edgeworth proposed to Mr. Hamilton that they should go to Dublin together to see the ascent, and he and Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton, Maria, Sneyd, William, and my two eldest little girls formed the party.

was, to the joy of thousands, flying from the top of Nelson's Pillar. Dressed quickly—breakfasted I don't know how—job coach punctual: crowds in motion even at nine o'clock in the streets: tide flowing all one way to Belvidere Gardens, lent by the proprietor for the occasion: called at Sneyd's lodgings in Anne Street: he and William gone: drove on, when we came near Belvidere such strings of carriages, such crowds of people on the road and on the raised footpath, there was no stirring: troops lined the road at each side: guard with officers at each entrance to prevent mischief; but unfortunately there were only two entrances, not nearly enough for such a confluence of people. Most imprudently we and several others got out of our carriages upon the raised footpath, in hopes of getting immediately at the garden door, which was within two yards of us, but nothing I ever felt was equal to the pressure of the crowd: they closed over our little heads, I thought we must have been flattened, and the breath squeezed out of our bodies. My father held Harriet fast, I behind him held Fanny with such a grasp! and dragged her on with a force I did not know I possessed. I really thought your children would never see you again with all their bones whole, and I cannot tell you what I suffered for ten minutes. My father, quite pale, calling with a stentor voice to the sentinels. A fat woman nearly separated me from Fanny. My father fairly kicked off the terrace a man who was intent upon nothing but an odious bag of cakes which he held close to his breast, swearing and pushing. Before us Mrs. Smyley and Mr. Smyley, with a lady he was protecting, and unable to protect anybody, looked more frightened than if he had lost a hundred causes: the lady continually saying,

'Let me back! let me back! if I could once get to my carriage!'

"The tide carried us on to the door. An admirable Scotch officer, who was mounting guard with a drawn sword, his face dropping perspiration, exclaimed at the sight of Harriet, 'Oh the child! take care of that child! she will be crushed to death!' He made a soldier put his musket across the doorway, so as to force a place for her to creep under: quick as lightning in she darted, and Fanny and I and my father after her. All serene, uncrowded, and fresh within the park.

"Instantly met Sneyd and William, and the two Mr. Foxes. Music and the most festive scene in the gardens: the balloon, the beautiful many-coloured balloon, chiefly maroon colour, with painted eagles, and garlands, and arms of Ireland, hung under the trees, and filling fast from pipes and an apparatus which I leave for William's scientific description: terrace before Belvidere House—well-dressed groups parading on it: groups all over the gardens, mantles, scarves, and feathers floating: all the commonalty outside in fields at half price. We soon espied Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton, and joined company, and were extremely happy, and wished for you and dear Honora. Sun shining, no wind. Presently we met the Solicitor-General: he started back, and made me such a bow as made me feel my own littleness; then shook my hands most cordially, and in a few moments told me more than most men could tell in an hour: just returned from Edinburgh—Mrs. Bushe and daughters too much fatigued to come and see the balloon.

"The Duke and Duchess of Richmond, and Sir Charles Vernon, and Sir Charles Saxton. The Miss

Gunns seated themselves in a happily conspicuous place, with some gentlemen, on the roof of Belvidere House, where, with veils flying and telescopes and opera glasses continually veering about, they attracted sufficient attention.

"Walking on, Sneyd exclaimed, 'My Uncle Ruxton!' I darted to him: 'Is my aunt here?' 'Yes, and Sophy, and Margaret, but I have lost them; I'm looking for them.' 'Oh, come with me, and we'll find them.' Soon we made our way behind the heels of the troopers' horses, who guarded a sacred circle round the balloon: found my aunt, and Sophy, and Mag—surprise and joy on both sides: got seats on the pedestal of some old statue, and talked and enjoyed ourselves: the balloon filling gradually. Now it was that my uncle proposed our returning by Black Castle.

"The drum beats! the flag flies! balloon full! It is moved from under the trees over the heads of the crowd: the car very light and slight—Mr. Sadler's son, a young lad, in the car. How the horses stood the motion of this vast body close to them I can't imagine, but they did. The boy got out. Mr. Sadler, quite composed, this being his twenty-sixth aërial ascent, got into his car: a lady, the Duchess of Richmond, I believe, presented to him a pretty flag: the balloon gave two majestic nods from side to side as the cords were cut. Whether the music continued at this moment to play or not, nobody can tell. No one spoke while the balloon successfully rose, rapidly cleared the trees, and floated above our heads: loud shouts and huzzas, one man close to us exclaiming, as he clasped his hands, 'Ah, musha, musha, God bless you! God be wid you!' Mr. Sadler, waving his flag and his hat, and bowing to

the world below, soon pierced a white cloud, and disappeared; then emerging, the balloon looked like a moon, black on one side, silver on the other; then like a dark bubble; then less and less, and now only a speck is seen; and now the fleeting rack obscures it. Never did I feel the full merit of Darwin's description till then.

"Next day at eight in the morning my father and William (who proceed to the Bishop of Derry's,) and Fanny went to Collon. Sneyd, Harriet, and I came here."

Mr. Edgeworth went to Derry at the Bishop's request, to examine the cathedral for the erection of a spire like his own, but the idea was never carried out there. Spires on the same construction were afterwards erected at Cork and at Enniskillen.

To Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Oct.* 26, 1812.

"Elections have been the order of the day with us as well as with you. I am glad to tell you that Lord Longford's troubles are over; he is now here, and has just been telling us that his victory for Colonel Hercules was as complete as his heart could wish. There would have been a duel but for Admiral Pakenham. One gentleman in his speech said that another had made the drummer of his corps play 'Protestant Boys.' The other said, 'That's a lie;' and both were proceeding to high words, when the Admiral stepped between them, and said, very gravely, 'Gentlemen, I did not know this meeting was a music meeting, but since you

appeal to us electors to decide your cause by your musical merits, let the past be past; and now for the present give us each of you a song, and here's the sheriff,' —who has no more ear than a post—'shall be judge between you.' Everybody laughed, and the two angry gentlemen had to laugh off their quarrel.

"Another gentleman said to the Admiral, after the election was over, 'Do you know, I had a mind to have stood myself; if I had, what would you have said?' 'That it was all a game of brag, and that, as you had the shuffling of the pack, there was no knowing what knave might turn up.'

"Lord Longford told us of Colonel Hercules Pakenham, at the siege of Badajos, walking with an engineer, a bomb whizzed over their heads and fell among the soldiers; and as they were carrying off the wounded, when the Colonel expressed some regret, the engineer said, 'I wonder you have not steeled your mind to these things. These men are carried to the hospital, and others come in their place. Let us go to the depôt.'

"Here the engineer had his wheelbarrows all laid out in nice order, and his pickaxes arranged in stars and various shapes; but, just as they were leaving the depôt, a bomb burst in the midst of them. 'Oh, heavenly powers, my picks!' cried the engineer, with clasped hands, in despair."

This autumn Mr. Edgeworth made an addition to Maria's very small room—a projecting window, which gave a few feet in space, with great additional light and cheerfulness; and much did she enjoy its advantages, and still more her father's kindness.

To C. S. Edgeworth,
in Dublin.

"*Edgeworthstown, Feb.* 10, 1813.

"Now for the stern, the vulgar realities of life—a carman, hight Farrelly, will call on you, and you will perhaps curse him, but not on my account; for this time I have nothing to plague you about. Oh, by-the-bye, I have; for the key of the box (which I read in your letter keg) never came with 'Rokeby.' Said 'Rokeby' is, in my opinion—and let every soul speak for themselves—most beautiful poetry: the four first cantos and half the fifth are all I have yet read. I think it a higher and better, because less Scotch, more universal style of poetry than any he has yet produced, though not altogether perfect of its kind; more discrimination of character, more knowledge of human nature, more generalized reflection, much more moral aim. Remorse as finely drawn as in Shakespear, and the shades, or rather the contrast, between desperate, bold villainy, and a character 'flagitious, yet not great,' very able. The buccaneer finely drawn, and new; and the style of allusion he uses uniformly supports the imagination of the character. I wish, however, there had not been quite so much murder! He gives us every variety of which the law takes cognizance. First murder with malice prepense; then simple murder or manslaughter, or at least womanslaughter; and I make no doubt that at the fire to-night I shall meet with accidental death. Heaven preserve us at least from *felo de se!*

"The character of Matilda is most beautiful, feminine, ingenuous, and noble. The Irish O'Neil charm-

ing: I regret that he was only barely born in Ireland. Wilfrid, a Mr. Arnott of a lover, as my Aunt Mary calls him: one most pathetic song, 'Oh, lady, weave no wreath for me,' made me ready to shoot him, I was so sorry for him."

"Patronage" was finished early in the year 1813, but Mr. Edgeworth, having settled that we should visit England this summer, put off the publication till after our return. Maria read it out to my father and mother and sister, my brother Francis and his bride, who visited us in the month of March; and on the 28th Mr. Edgeworth, Maria, and I set out for England.

To Miss Sneyd.

"*Bangor Ferry, March* 31, 1813.

"'I will go and write a few lines of a letter to my dear Aunt Mary.'

"'Oh! why should you write now, my dear? You have nothing new to tell her.'

"'Nothing new, but I love her, and wish to write to her; if I did not love her, I should be worse than Caliban.'

"'Well, write only a few lines.'

"'That is just what I mean to do, and go on with my letter at any odd place where we *stop the night.*'

"You have heard of all we saw at Howth, so I go on from Holyhead. Breakfasted in company with Mr. Grainger: he has lived in very good company abroad, and told us a variety of entertaining anecdotes: Caulincourt, now Duc de Vincennes, was brought up in the family of the Prince de Condé, l'enfant de la Maison,

the playfellow of the Duc d'Enghien. Buonaparte employed Caulincourt to seize the Duc d'Enghien; the wretch did so, and has been repaid by a dukedom.

"We asked how the present Empress was liked in France. 'Not at all by the Parisians; she is too haughty, has the Austrian scornful lip, and sits back in her carriage when she goes through the streets.' The same complaint was made against Marie Antoinette. On what small things the popularity of the high and mighty depends!

"Josephine is living very happily, amusing herself with her gardens and her shrubberies. This *ci-devant* Empress and Kennedy and Co., the seedsmen, are, as Mr. Grainger says, in partnership; she has a licence to send to him what shrubs and seeds she chooses from France, and he has licence to send cargoes in return to her. Mr. Grainger will carry over my box to Madame Recamier.

"At the inn door at Bangor Ferry we saw a most curiously packed curricle, with all manner of portmanteaus and hat-boxes slung in various ingenious ways, and behind the springs two baskets, the size and shape of Lady Elizabeth Pakenham's basket. A huge bunch of white feathers was sticking out from one end of one of these baskets; and as we approached to examine it, out came the live head of a white peacock—a Japan peacock and peahen. The gentleman to whom the carriage belonged appeared next, carrying on a perch a fine large macaw. This perch was made to fasten behind the carriage. The servant who was harnessing the horses would not tell to whom the carriage belonged. He replied to all inquiries, 'It belongs to that there gentleman.'

"We have enjoyed this fine day: had a delightful walk before dinner in a hanging wood by the water side—pretty sheep-paths, wood anemonies in abundance, with their white flowers in full blow. Two ploughs going in the field below the wood: very cheerful the sound of the Welshmen's voices talking to their horses. The ploughing, giving the idea of culture and civilization, contrasted agreeably with the wildness of the wood and mountains. Good night."

"*Thursday.*

"This morning we set out for the slate quarries; we took our time, and full time to see everything at leisure. The railways are above six miles long; they are very narrow. I had formed an idea of their being much more magnificent, but in this country canals and railways are made as useful and as little splendid as possible. I was surprised to see these railways winding round the rocks, and going over heaps of rubbish where you would think no wheelbarrow even could go.

"From the slate-cutting we went to the slate quarries. We had been admiring the beauty of the landscape. My father did not say anything to raise my expectations, but when we arrived near the place, he took me by the hand, and led me over a heap of rubbish, on the top of which there was a railway. We walked on until we came between two slate mountains, and found ourselves in the midst of the quarries. It was the most sublime sight of all the works of man I ever beheld. The men looked like pigmies. There is a curious cone of greyish-coloured slate standing alone, which the workmen say is good for nothing; but it is good for its picturesque appearance. A heavy shower

of hail came on, which, falling between the rifts of the rocks, and blown by the high wind, added to the sublimity of the scene: we were comfortably sheltered in one of the sheds.

"Finding that Mr. Worthington was at Liverpool, my father determined to go there, and we have come on to Conway. During a storm of wind, thunder, and lightning last night it snowed just enough to cover the tops of the mountains with white, to increase the beauty of the prospect for us: they appeared more majestic from the strong contrast of bright lights and broad shades: the leaves of the honeysuckles all green in the hedges, fine hollies, primroses in abundance: it was literally spring in the lap of winter. Penmanmawr has, my father says, considerably altered its appearance, since he knew it first, from the falling of masses of rock, and the crumbling away of the mighty substance. Cultivation has crept up its sides to a prodigious height. A little cottage nestled just under the mountain's huge stone cap. The fragments of rock that have rolled down, some of them across the road, are ten times the size of the rock in Mr. Keating's lawn,[1] and in contrast with this idea of danger are sheep and lambs feeding quietly; the lambs looking not larger than little Francis' deceased kittens Muff and Tippet.

"We reached Conway at six o'clock. The landlady of the Harp Inn knew my father, and recollected Lovell and my Aunt Ruxton. The boy to whom Lovell used to be so good, and who stopped my father on Penman-

[1] A curious isolated stone, about ten feet by four, which stood in the Vicarage lawn at Edgeworthstown, said to have been aimed at the church by a Pagan giant from the Hill of Ardagh. It has been within the last few years destroyed.

mawr to tell him that Lovell had given him Lazy Lawrence, was drowned with many others crossing the Ferry in a storm. The old harper who used to be the delight of travellers is now in a state of dotage. There was no harper at Bangor: the waiter told us 'they were no profit to master, and was always in the way in the passage; so master never lets them come now.'

"In the midst of all the sublime and beautiful I had a happy mixture of the comic, for we had a Welsh postillion who entertained us much by his contracted vocabulary, and still more contracted sphere of ideas. He and my father could never understand one another, because my father said 'qu*a*rry,' and the Welshman said 'qu*e*rry;' and the burthen of all he said was continually asking if we would not like to be 'driven to Caernarvon.'

"*Friday morning, seven o'clock,* dressed, and ready to go on with my scribbling. I assure you, my dear kind Aunt Mary, it is a great pleasure to me to write this letter at odd minutes while the horses are changing, or after breakfast or dinner for a quarter of an hour at a time, so that it is impossible that it should tire me. I owe all my present conveniencies for writing to various Sneyds: I use Emma Sneyd's pocket-inkstand; my ivory-cutter penknife[1] was the gift of my Aunt Charlotte, and my little Sappho seal a present of Aunt Mary's.

"For miles we have had such beautiful hollies in the hedges: I wish my Aunt Charlotte would be so kind as to have a few small hollies out of Wilkinson's garden planted in the new ditch between Wood's and Duffy's;

[1] A penknife in a long, flat, ivory handle, that served to cut open book-leaves.

also some cuttings of honeysuckles and pyracanthus—enough can be had from my garden. I must finish abruptly."

To Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Liverpool, April* 6, 1813.

"Many times—a hundred times within this week—have I wished, my dearest aunt, to talk over with you the things and people I have seen. I am very well, very happy, and much entertained and interested.

"Liverpool is very fine and very grand, and my father soon found out Mr. Roscoe: he was so good as to come to see us, and invited us to his house, Allerton Hall, about seven miles from Liverpool. He is a benevolent, cheerful, gentlemanlike old man; tall, neither thin nor fat, thick grey hair. He is very like the prints you have seen of him; his bow courteous, not courtly; his manner frank and prepossessing, without pretension of any kind. He enters into conversation readily, and immediately tells something entertaining or interesting, seeming to follow the natural course of his own thoughts, or of yours, without effort. Mrs. Roscoe seems to adore her husband, and to be so fond of her children, and has such a good understanding and such a warm heart, it is impossible not to like her. Mr. Roscoe gave himself up to us the whole day. Allerton Hall is a spacious house, in a beautiful situation: fine library, every room filled with pictures, many of them presents from persons in Italy who admired his Leo the Tenth. One of Tasso has a sort of mad vigilance in the eyes, as if he that instant saw the Genius that haunted him. Mr. Roscoe has arranged his col-

lection admirably, so as to show, in chronological order, in edifying gradation, the progress of painting. The picture which he prized the most was by one of Raphael's masters, not in the least valuable in itself, but for a frieze below it by Michael Angelo, representing the destruction of the Oracles: it is of a grey colour. Mr. Roscoe thinks it one of Michael Angelo's earliest performances, and says it is *conceded* to be the only original Michael Angelo in England. Of this I know nothing, but I know that it struck me as full of genius, and I longed for you and Margaret when we looked at a portfolio full of Michael Angelo's sketches, drawings, and studies. It is admirable to see the pains that a really great man takes to improve a first idea. Turning from these drawings to a room full of Fuseli's horribly distorted figures, I could not help feeling astonishment, not only at the bad taste, but at the infinite conceit and presumption of Fuseli. How could this man make himself a name! I believe he gave these pictures to Mr. Roscoe, else I suppose they would not be here sprawling their fantastic lengths, like misshapen dreams. Instead of *le beau*, they exhibit *le laid* ideal.

"At dinner Darwin's poetry was mentioned, and Mr. Roscoe neither ran him down nor cried him up. He said exactly the truth, that he was misled by a false theory of poetry—that everything should be picture—and that therefore he has not taken the means to touch the feelings; and Mr. Roscoe made what seemed to me a new and just observation, that writers of secondary powers, when they are to represent either objects of nature or feelings of the human mind, always begin by a simile: they tell you what it is like, not what it is.

"*April* 9.

"I finish this at Mr. Holland's, at Knutsford. We spent a delightful day at Manchester, where we owed our chief pleasure to Dr. Ferrier and his daughter."

To Miss Honora Edgeworth.

"*Derby, April* 25, 1813.

"My dear Honora,

"Though I have not written to you, I have often thought of you, as your name was so often mentioned by every individual at Byrkely Lodge.

"We have been now five days at Mr. Strutt's. We have been treated with so much hospitality and kindness by him, and he showed such a high esteem, and I may say affection for my father, that even if he had not the superior understanding he possesses, it would be impossible for me not to like him. From the moment we entered his house he gave up his whole time to us, his servants, his carriage, everything and everybody in his family were devoted to us, and all was done with such simplicity of generosity, that we felt at ease even while we were loaded with favours. This house is indeed, as Sneyd and William described it, a palace; and it is plain that the convenience of the inhabitants has everywhere been consulted: the ostentation of wealth nowhere appears.

"Seven hours of one day Mr. Strutt and his nephew Jedediah gave up to showing us the cotton mills, and another whole morning he gave up to showing to us the infirmary: he built it—a noble building; hot air from below conveyed by a *cockle* all over the house. The whole institution a most noble and touching sight;

such a GREAT thing, planned and carried into successful execution in so few years by one man!

"We dined at Mr. Joseph Strutt's, and were in the evening at Mr. George Strutt's; and I will name some of the people we met, for Sneyd and William will like to know whom we saw:—Dr. Forrester; Mr. French; Miss French, who has good taste, as she proved by her various compliments to Sneyd; Miss Broadhurst, not my heiress, though she says that, after the publication of the 'Absentee,' people used to turn their heads when she was announced, and ask if that was Miss Edgeworth's Miss Broadhurst! She met Sneyd in Dublin; has been lately at Kilkenny, and admired Mr. Rothe's acting of Othello. We saw a good deal of Mr. Sylvester,[1] who is, I think, a man of surprising abilities, of a calm and fearless mind: an original and interesting character. Edward Strutt is indeed all that Sneyd and William described—a boy of great abilities, affectionate, and with a frank countenance and manner which win at once. One of our greatest pleasures has been the hearing everybody, from Edward upwards, speak of Sneyd and William with such affection, and with such knowledge of their characters. We all like Miss Lawrence.

"We have been at the Priory: Mrs. Darwin at first much out of spirits. Besides the death of her son, she had lost a grandchild, and her daughter Harriet, Mrs. Maling, had just sailed with her husband for the Mediterranean. The Priory is a beautiful place, and Emma Darwin very beautiful.

"We breakfasted at Markeaton with Mr. Mundy: he is a charming old gentleman, lively, polite, and playful

[1] The inventor of the Cockle or Sylvester stove, now so universally used.

as if he was twenty. He was delighted to see my father, and they talked over their school days with great zest. My father was, you know, at school, Mr. Mundy's horse, 'Little Driver.'"

"*Cambridge, Wednesday.*

"My mother will tell you the history of our night travels over the bad road between Leicester and Kettering; my father holding the lantern stuck up against one window, and my mother against the other the bit of wax candle Kitty gave me. I don't think we could have got on without it. Pray tell her, for she laughed when I put it in my box, and said it might be of vast use to us at some odd place.

"Mr. Smedley has just called: tell Sneyd we think him very pleasing. I enclose the 'Butterfly's Ball' for Sophy, and a letter to the King written by Dr. Holland when six years old: his father found him going with it to the post. Give it to Aunt Mary."

This letter was an offer from Master Holland to raise a regiment. He and some of his little comrades had got a drum and a flag, and used to go through the manual exercise. It was a pity the letter did not reach the King: he would have been delighted at it.

To C. S. Edgeworth.

"*London, May* 1, 1813.

"Please to take this in small doses, but not fasting.

"Let us go back, if you please, to Cambridge. Thursday morning we went to breakfast with Mr. Smedley. It had been a dreadful rainy night, but

luckily the rain ceased in the morning, and the streets were dried by the wind on purpose for us. In Sidney College we found your friend in neat, cheerful rooms, with orange-fringed curtains, pretty drawings, and prints: breakfast-table as plentifully prepared as you could have had it—tea, coffee, tongue, cold beef, exquisite bread, and many inches of butter. I suppose you know, but no one else at home can guess, why I say *inches* of butter. All the butter in Cambridge must be stretched into rolls a yard in length and an inch in diameter, and these are sold by inches, and measured out by compasses, in a truly mathematical manner, worthy of a University.

"Mr. Smedley made us feel at home at once: my mother made tea, I coffee; he called you 'Sneyd,' and my father seemed quite pleased. After having admired the drawings and pictures, and Fanny's kettle-holder, we sallied forth with our friendly guide. It was quite fine and sunshiny, and the gardens and academic shades really beautiful. We went to the University Hall—the election of a new Professor to the Chemical Professorship was going on. Farish was one of the candidates: the man of whom Leslie Foster used to talk in such raptures when he first came from Cambridge; the man who lectured on arches, and whose paradox of the one-toothed wheel William will recollect. My father was introduced to him, and invited him to dine with us: Mr. Farish accepted the invitation. We sat on a bench with a few ladies. A number of Fellows, with black tiles on their heads, walked up and down the hall, whispering to one another; and in five minutes Mr. Smedley said, 'The election is over: I must go and congratulate Mr. Professor Farish.'

"We next proceeded to the University Library, not nearly so fine as the Dublin College Library. Saw Edward the Sixth's famous little MS. exercise book: hand good, and ink admirable: shame to the modern chemists, who cannot make half as good ink now! Saw Faustus' first printed book and a Persian letter to Lord Wellesley, and an Indian idol, said to be made of rice, looking like, and when I lifted it feeling as heavy as, marble. Mr. Smedley smiled at my being so taken with an idol, and I told him that I was curious about this *rice-marble,* because we had lately seen at Derby a vase of similar substance, about which there had been great debates. Mr. Smedley then explained to me that the same word in Persian expresses rice, and the composition of which these idols are made.

"We saw the MS. written on papyrus leaves: I had seen the papyrus at the Liverpool Botanic Garden, and had wondered how the stiff bark could be rolled up; and here I saw that it is not rolled up, but cut in strips and fastened with strings at each end.

"In this library were three casts, taken after death—how or why they came there I don't know, but they were very striking—one of Charles XII., with the hole in the forehead where the bullet entered at the siege of Fredericshall; that of Pitt, very like his statue from the life, and all the prints of him; and that of Fox, shocking! no character of greatness or ability—nothing but pain, weakness, and imbecility. It is said to be so unlike what he was in health, that none would know it. One looks at casts taken after death with curiosity and interest, and yet it is not probable that they should show the real natural or habitual character of the person: they can often only mark the degree of bodily

pain or ease felt in the moment of death. I think these casts made me pause to reflect more than anything else I saw this day.

"Went next to Trinity College Library: beautiful! I liked the glass doors opening to the gardens at the end, and trees in full leaf. The proportions of this room are excellent, and everything but the ceiling, which is too plain. The busts of Bacon and Newton excellent; but that of Bacon looks more like a courtier than a philosopher: his ruff is elegantly plaited in white marble. By Cipriani's painted window, with its glorious anachronisms, we were much amused; and I regret that it is not recorded in Irish Bulls. It represents the presentation of Sir Isaac Newton to His Majesty George the *Third,* seated on his throne, and *Bacon* seated on the steps of the said throne writing! Cipriani had made the King, Henry VIII., but the Fellows of the College thought it would be pretty to pay a compliment to His Gracious Majesty George III., so they made Cipriani cut off Henry VIII.'s head, and stick King George in his place: the junction is still to be seen in the first design of the picture, covered with a pasted paper cravat! like the figure that changes heads in the 'Little Henry' book.

"Saw Milton's original MSS. of his lesser poems, and his letters and his plan of a tragedy on the subject of 'Paradise Lost,' which tragedy I rejoice he did not write. I have not such delight in seeing the handwriting of great authors and great folk as some people have; besides by this time I had become very hungry, and was right glad to accept Mr. Smedley's proposal that we should repair to his rooms and take some sandwiches.

"Rested, ate, talked, looked at the engravings of Clarke's marbles, and read the account of how these ponderous marbles had been transported to England. We saw the marbles themselves. The famous enormous head of Ceres must have belonged to a gigantic statue, and perhaps at a great height may have had a fine effect. It is in a sadly mutilated condition; there is no face; the appearance of the head in front is exactly like that of Sophy's doll, whose face has peeled off, yet Clarke strokes it and talks of its beautiful *contour*. The hair is fine, and the figure, from its vast size, may be sublime.

"After having recruited our strength, we set out again to the Vice-Chancellor Davis', to see a famous picture of Cromwell. As we knocked at his Vice-Chancellorship's door, Mr. Smedley said to me, 'Now, Miss Edgeworth, if you would but settle in Cambridge! here is our Vice-Chancellor a bachelor . . . *do* consider about it.'

"We went up stairs; found the Vice-Chancellor's room empty; had leisure before he appeared to examine the fine picture of Cromwell, in which there is more the expression of greatness of mind and determination than his usual character of hypocrisy. This portrait seems to say, 'Take away that bauble,' not 'We are looking for the corkscrew.'

"The Vice-Chancellor entered, and such a wretched, pale, unhealthy object I have seldom beheld! He seemed crippled and writhing with rheumatic pains, hardly able to walk. After a few minutes had passed, Mr. Smedley came round to me and whispered, 'Have you made up your mind?' 'Yes, quite, thank you.'

"Now for the beauty of Cambridge—the beauty of

beauties—King's College Chapel! On the first entrance I felt silenced by admiration. I never saw anything at once so beautiful and so sublime. The prints give a good idea of the beauty of the spandrilled ceiling, with its rich and light ornaments; but no engraved representation can give an idea of the effect of size, height, and *continuity* of grandeur in the whole building. Besides, the idea of DURATION, the sublime idea of having lasted for ages, is more fully suggested by the sight of the real building than it can be by any representation or description: for which reason I only tell you the effect it had upon my mind.

"The organ began to play an anthem of Handel's while we were in the chapel: I wished for you, my dear Sneyd, particularly at that moment! Your friend took us up the hundred stairs to the roof, where he was delighted with the sound of the organ and the chanting voices rising from the choir below. My father was absorbed in the mechanical wonders of the roof: that stone roof, of which Sir Christopher Wren said, 'Show me how the first stone was laid, and I will show you how the second is laid.'

"Mr. Smedley exclaimed, 'Is not the sound of the organ fine?' To which my father, at cross purposes, answered, 'Yes, the iron was certainly added afterwards.'

"Mr. Smedley at once confessed that he had no knowledge or taste for mechanics, but he had the patience and good-nature to walk up and down this stone platform for three-quarters of an hour. He stood observing my mother's very eager examination with my father of the defects in the wooden roof, and pointing out where it had been cut away to admit the stone, as

a proof that the stone roof had been an afterthought; and at last turned to me with a look of astonishment. 'Mrs. Edgeworth seems to have this taste for mechanics *too*.' He spoke of it as a kind of mania. So I nodded at him very gravely, and answered, 'Yes, you will find us all tinctured with it, more or less.'

"At last, to Mr. Smedley's great joy, he got my father alive off this roof, and on his way to Downing, the new college of which Leslie Foster talked so much, and said was to be like the Parthenon. Shockingly windy walk: thought my brains would have been blown out. Passed Peter House, and saw the rooms in which Gray lived, and the irons of his fire-escape at the window. Warned Mr. Smedley of the danger of my father being caught by a coachmaker's yard which we were to pass. My father overheard me, laughed, and contented himself with a side glance at the springs of gigs, and escaped that danger. I nearly disgraced myself, as the company were admiring the front of Emmanuel College, by looking at a tall man stooping to kiss a little child. Got at last, in spite of the wind and coachmakers' yards, within view of Downing College, and was sadly disappointed. It will never bear comparison with King's College Chapel.

"Home to dinner: Mr. Farish and Mr. Smedley were very agreeable and entertaining, and *did* very well together, though such different persons. Mr. Farish is the most primitive, simple-hearted man I ever saw.

"The bells were ringing in honour of Professor Farish's election, or, as Mr. Smedley said, at the Professor's expense.

"Farish insisted upon it very coolly that they were not ringing for him, but for a shoulder of mutton.

"'A shoulder of mutton! what do you mean?'

"'Why a man left to the University a shoulder of mutton for every Thursday, on condition that the bells should always ring for him on that day: so this is for the shoulder of mutton.'

"Mr. Farish paid us no compliments in words, but his coming to spend the evening with us the day of his election, when I suppose he might have been feasted by all the grand and learned in the University, was, I think, the greatest honour my father has received since he came to England; and so he felt it.

"I suppose you know that Mr. Smedley has published minutes of the trial of that Mr. Kendal who was accused of having set fire to Sidney College, and who, though brought off by the talents of Garrow, was so generally thought to be guilty, and to have only escaped by a quirk of the law, that he has been expelled the University. What a strange thing that this trial at Cambridge and that in Dublin, of incendiaries,[1] should take place within so short a time of each other! It seems as if the fashion of certain crimes prevailed at certain times.

"'Good-bye, Mr. Smedley! I hope you like us half as well as we liked you.' We thought it well worth our while to have come thirty miles out of our way to see him and Cambridge, and you, Sneyd, have the thanks of the whole party for your advice.

"In passing through the village of Trumpington, and just as we came within sight of Dr. Clarke's house, I urged my father to call upon him.

"'Without an introduction, and two ladies with me!

[1] The trial in Dublin was that of "Moscow Cavendish."

No, with all my impudence, my dear Maria, I cannot do that.'

"'Oh, do! you will repent afterwards if you do not: we shall never have another opportunity of seeing him.'

"'Well, at your peril, then, be it.'

"He let down the glass, and ordered the postillion to drive up to Dr. Clarke's house. I quailed in the corner the moment I heard the order given, but said nought. Out jumped my father, and during two or three minutes whilst he was in the house, and my mother and I waiting in the carriage at the door, I was in an agony. But it was soon over; for out came little Dr. Clarke flying to us, all civility, and joy, and gratitude, and honour, and pleasure, 'ashamed and obliged,' as he handed us up the steps and into a very elegant drawing-room.

"I do not know whether you have seen him, but from the print I had imagined he was a large man, with dark eyes and hair, and a penetrating countenance. No such thing: he is a little, square, pale, flat-faced, good-natured-looking, fussy man, with very intelligent eyes, yet great credulity of countenance, and still greater benevolence. In a moment he whisked about the different rooms upstairs and down, to get together books, sketches, everything that could please us; and Angelica's drawings—she draws beautifully.

"Angelica herself, Mrs. Clarke, is a timid, dark, soft-eyed woman, with a good figure. I am told it is rude to say a person is very clean, but I may praise Angelica for looking elegantly clean, brilliantly white, with a lace Mary Queen of Scots cap, like that which I am sure you remember on Lady Adelaide Forbes. She received us with timid courtesy, but her timidity soon

wore off, and the half-hour we spent here made us wish to have spent an hour. Dr. Clarke seemed highly gratified that his travels in Greece had interested us so much: showed us the original drawings of Moscow, and a book of views of the ruins at Athens, by the draughtsman who went out with the Duc de Choiseul Gouffier—beautifully done; mere outlines, perfectly distinct, and giving, I think, better architectural ideas than we have from more finished and flattered drawings.

"We were sorry not to see more, and glad we had seen so much, of Dr. Clarke and his Angelica, and his fine little boy about five years old. A tall, dark-eyed, fine, fashionable-looking man, Dr. Clarke introduced to us as Mr. Walpole. My father entered into conversation with him, and found he had known Captain Beaufort in the Mediterranean.

"When we were going away, Dr. Clarke, between my mother and me, seemed puzzled how to get us both into the carriage at once; but he called to Mr. Walpole.

"'Walpole, put this lady into the carriage.'

"And with a 'Meadows' air he obeyed.

"Now we are again on the London road, and nothing interrupted our perusal of 'Pride and Prejudice' for the rest of the morning. I am desired not to give you my opinion of 'Pride and Prejudice,' but desire you to get it directly, and tell us yours."

To Miss Ruxton.

"*London, May,* 1813.

"I fear Madame de Stael's arrival may be put off till after we leave town. The Edinburgh review of her book has well prepared all the world for her. The first

persons who came to see us were Sir Humphry and Lady Davy, who have been uniformly and zealously kind and attentive to us. We have been frequently at their dinners and parties, and I should fill a roll as long as that genealogy Foote unrolled across the stage, if I were to give you a list of the names of all the people we have met at their house. Of Lord Byron I can tell you only that his appearance is nothing that you would remark. The Miss Berrys are all that you have heard of them from people of various tastes; consequently you know that they are well bred, and have nice tact in conversation. Miss Catharine Fanshaw I particularly like; she has delightful talents. Her drawings have charmed my mother, full of invention as well as taste; her Village School and Village Children at Play are beautiful compositions, and her drawings for the Bath Guide are full of humour and character.

"Lady Crewe has still the remains of much beauty. Except her dress, which happened to be blue, there appeared to be nothing else *blue* about her. The contrast between her really fashionable air and manners and that of the *strugglers* and imitators struck me much: Lady Elizabeth Whitbread, is in one word, delightful. Miss Fox very agreeable—converses at once, without preface or commonplace: Lady Charlotte Lindsay ditto: Lady Darnley has been very polite in her attentions: both Lord and Lady Hardwick peculiarly gracious. Lord Somerville I cannot help being charmed with, for he says he is charmed with Lady Delacour and Lady Geraldine, whom he pronounces to be perfect women of fashion, and says they are in high repute in the equerry's room at court. He was quite indignant against certain pretenders to fashion. I told him the

remark of a friend of ours, that a gentleman or gentlewoman cannot be made under two generations. 'In less than *five*, madam, I think it scarcely possible,' said he.

"Lady Lansdowne, taking in beauty, character, conversation, talents, and manners, I think superior to any woman I have seen; perfectly natural, daring to be herself, gentle, sprightly, amiable, and engaging. Lydia White has been very kind to us, and eager to bring together people who would suit and please us: very agreeable dinner at her house; she conducts these *bel esprit* parties well; her vivacity breaks through the constraint of those who stand upon great reputations, and are afraid of committing themselves.

"Charming amiable Lady Wellington! as she truly said of herself, she is always 'Kitty Pakenham to her friends;' after comparison with crowds of others, beaux esprits, fine ladies and fashionable *scramblers* for notoriety, her dignified graceful simplicity rises in one's opinion, and we feel it with more conviction of its superiority. She showed us her delightful children. Lord Longford just come to town; met us yesterday at the Exhibition of Sir Joshua Reynolds' pictures. Some of these are excellent: his children, from the sublime Samuel to the arch Gipsy, are admirable.

"We hope to see Mrs. Siddons act on the 25th; it was thought impossible to get a box, but the moment my father pronounced the name Edgeworth, Mr. Brandon, the box-keeper, said he should have one. Lady Charleville, who is a very clever woman, goes with us with her daughter and Lord Tullamore. We have been to a grand night at Mrs. Hope's—the rooms really deserve the French epithet of superbe—all of beauty, rank, and fashion that London can assemble, I may say in the

newspaper style, were there. The Prince Regent stood one-third of the night, holding converse with Lady Elizabeth Monk, she leaning gracefully on a bronze ornament in the centre of the room, in the midst of the sacred but very small circle, etiquette could keep round them. About 900 people were at this assembly; the crowd of carriages were so great, that after sitting waiting in ours for an hour, the coachman told us there was no chance of our getting in unless we got out and walked. Another good-natured coachman backed his horses, and we bravely crossed the line and got into the house and up the staircase, but no power of ours could have got on, but for the gloriously large body, and the good-natured politeness of the Archbishop of Tuam, who fortunately met us at the door, recognized us just as he would have done at Mrs. Bourke's, in the county of Longford, and made way for us through the crowd, and in the wake of his greatness we sailed on prosperously, and never stopped till he presented us to his beautiful daughter, who received us with a winning smile. I asked Mr. Hope who some one was? 'I really don't know; I don't know half the people here, nor do they know me or Mrs. Hope even by sight. Just now I was behind a lady who was making her *speech*, as she thought, to Mrs. Hope, but she was addressing a stranger.' Among the old beauties the Duchess of Rutland held her pre-eminence and looked the youngest.

"A few days after we came to town we were told by Mr. Wakefield that there was to be at the Freemasons' tavern a meeting on the Lancasterian schools, at which the reports of the Irish Education Committee were to be alluded to, and that the Dukes of Kent and Sussex, Lord Lansdowne, Sir James Macintosh, and Mr. Whit-

bread, were all to speak. We went; fine large hall, ranged with green benches like a lecture room: raised platform at one end for the *performers:* arm chairs for the Royal Dukes, and common chairs for common men. Waited an hour, and were introduced to various people, among others, to Mr. Allen, who is famous for his generous benevolence, who lives most economically and gives thousands as easily as others would give pence. Dumont came and seated himself between my mother and me, and the hour's waiting was so filled with conversation that it seemed but five minutes.

"Enter on the platform, the royal Dukes preceded by stewards with white staves; gentlemen of the Committee ranged at the back of the theatre, one row in front on each side of the Dukes, Lord Lansdowne, Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Lancaster, two or three others, and Mr. Edgeworth. The object of the meeting was to effect a junction between the Bell and Lancasterian parties. It had been previously agreed that Lancaster should have his debts paid, and should retire and give up his schools. Lord Lansdowne spoke extremely well, matter and manner; when he adverted to the Board of Education he turned to my father and called upon him to support his assertion, that the dignified clergy in Ireland among those commissioners had acted with liberality. It had been previously arranged that my father was to move the vote of thanks to the ladies, but of this we knew nothing; and when he rose and when I heard the Duke of Kent in his sonorous voice say 'Mr. Edgeworth,' I was so frightened I dared not look up, but I was soon re-assured. My father's speaking was, next to Lord Lansdowne's, the best I heard, and loud plaudits convinced me that I was not singular in

this opinion. The Duke of Kent speaks well and makes an excellent chairman.

"Yesterday my father was invited to a Lancasterian dinner; for an account of it I refer you to Lord Fingal, next to whom my father sat, but as you may not see him immediately I must tell you that my father's health was drank, and that when his name was mentioned, loud applause ensued, and the Duke of Bedford, after speaking of the fourteenth report of the Irish Board of Education, pronounced a eulogium on 'the excellent letter which is appended to that report, full of liberality and good sense, on which indeed the best part of the report seems founded. I mean the letter by Mr. Edgeworth, to whom this country as well as Ireland is so much indebted.'

"Yesterday I had a good hour in comfort to write to you before breakfast, which was scarcely ended when Mr. Wakefield came in with a letter from the Duke of Bedford, who is anxious to see my father's experiments on the draft of wheel-carriages tried. Then came Lord Somerville, who sat and talked and invited us to his country house, but all this did not forward my letter. Then came Lady Darnley; and then my father walked off with Lord Somerville, and we gave orders no one should be let in; so we only heard vain thunders at the door, and I got on half a page, but then came poor Peggy Langan,[1] and her we admitted; she is in an excellent place, with Mrs. Haldimand, Mrs. Marcet's sister-

[1] Granddaughter to the original of Thady, in Castle Rackrent. Mrs. Beddoes had, two years before, taken her to England with her. She lived with Mrs. Haldimand for thirty years. Her sister, who at twelve years old, baked the rolls when her mother was ill, was the origin of Simple Susan, and is still living, well off, and happy.

in-law, and she, Peggy, sat and talked and told of how happy she was, and how good her mistress was, and we liked her simplicity and goodness of heart, but as I said before, all this did not forward my letter. Coach at the door. 'Put on your hat, Maria, and come out and pay visits.'

"To save myself trouble, I send a list of the visits we made just as my mother marked them on the card by which we steered. God knows how I should steer without her. The crosses mark the three places where we were let in. Lady Milbanke is very agreeable, and has a charming well-informed daughter. Mrs. Weddell is a perfectly well-bred most agreeable old lady, sister to Lady Rockingham, who lived in the Sir Joshua Reynolds set: tells anecdotes of Burke, Fox, and Windham—magnificent house—fine pictures. We spoke of having just seen the exhibition of Sir Joshua Reynolds' pictures. 'Perhaps if you are fond of paintings you would take the trouble of walking into the next room, and I will show you what gives me a particular interest in Sir Joshua Reynolds' pictures.' Large folding doors opened—large room full of admirable copies from Sir Joshua Reynolds in crayons, done by Mrs. Weddell herself. My mother says they are quite astonishing. Her conversation, as good as her painting, passed through many books lightly with touch-and-go ease. I mentioned a curious anecdote of Madame D'Arblay: that when she landed at Portsmouth, a few months ago and saw on a plate at Admiral Foley's, a head of Lord Nelson, and the word Trafalgar, she asked what Trafalgar meant? She actually, as Lady Spencer told me, who had the anecdote from Doctor Charles Burney, did not know that the English had been victorious, or that

Lord Nelson was dead! This is the mixed effect of the recluse life she led, and of the care taken in France to keep the people ignorant of certain events. I mentioned a similar instance in Thiebault's Memoirs, of the Chevalier Mason, living at Potsdam, and not knowing anything of the Seven Years' war. Then Mrs. Weddell went through Thiebault and Madame de Bareith's Memoirs, and asked if I had ever happened to meet with an odd entertaining book, Madame de Baviere's Memoirs. How little I thought, my dear Aunt Ruxton, when you gave me that book, that it would stand me *in stead* at Mrs. Weddell's—we talked it over and had a great deal of laughing and diversion.

"Came home: found my father dressing to go to Sir Samuel Romilly's—we two were to dine at Lady Levinge's; while we were dressing a long note from Miss Berry, sent by her own maid, to apologize for a mistake of her servants who had said 'not at home,' and to entreat we would look in on her this evening—much hurried. Lady Levinge's dinner, which was not on the table till eight o'clock, was very entertaining, because quite a new set of people. Called in the evening at Miss Berry's—quite like French society, most agreeable—had a great deal of conversation with Lady Charlotte Lindsay. Mr. Ward was there, but I did not hear him. Went, shamefully late, to Mrs. Sneyd's—then home: found my father in bed—stood at the foot of it, and heard his account of his dinner. Dr. Parr, Dumont, Malthus, &c., but I have not time to say more. I have been standing in my dressing-gown writing on the top of a chest of drawers, and now I must dress for a breakfast at Lady Davy's, where we are to meet Lord Byron: but I must say, that at the third place where we were

let in yesterday, Lady Wellington's, we spent by far the most agreeable half-hour of the day."

One day, coming late to dinner at Mr. Horner's, we found Doctor Parr very angry at our having delayed, and then interrupted dinner, but he ended by giving Maria his blessing. One of our pleasantest days was a breakfast at Mr. and Mrs. Carr's, at Hampstead, where we met General and Mrs. Bentham, just come from Russia, full of interesting information. Maria also spent a day in the country with Sir Samuel and Lady Romilly, who was so beautiful and so engaging; and to this day's happiness Maria often recurred. We met one evening at Lady Charleville's Mrs. Abington, with whom Maria was much entertained; she recited two epilogues for us with exquisite wit and grace—she spoke with frankness and feeling of her career, when often after the triumph of success in some brilliant character, splendidly dressed, in the blaze of light, with thunders of applause, she quitted the theatre for her poor little lonely lodging—and admirably described her disenchanted, dispirited sensations.

One morning Maria and I went to Westminster Abbey with some friends, among whom was Sir James Macintosh—only one morning; days might have been spent without exhausting the information he so easily, and with such enjoyment to himself, as well as to his hearers, poured forth with quotations, appropriate anecdotes, and allusions historical, poetical, and biographical, as we went along.

We unfortunately missed seeing Madame D'Arblay, and we left London before the arrival of Madame de Stael. We went on the 16th of June to Clifton, where

we spent some days with Mr. and Mrs. King. Walking by the docks at Bristol with Mr. Edgeworth, I was startled by a sentinel as we passed calling out, "How are you, Counsellor?[1] I hope your honour's well." He was from our neighbourhood, a soldier in an Irish Militia regiment, then quartered at Bristol.

From Clifton we went to Gloucester, where Maria took up a link of her former life, paying a visit to Mrs. Chandler, from whom she had received much kindness at Mr. Day's when her eyes were inflamed. We then went on to Malvern, where Mrs. Beddoes was then living.

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Malvern Links, June,* 1813.

"How good you have been, my dear aunt, in sparing Sophy to Edgeworthstown, and since you have been so good it is in encroaching human nature to expect that you will be still better, and that you and my uncle and Mag will come to Edgeworthstown for her; we shall be home in a fortnight. What joy, what delight to meet you among the dear faces who will welcome us there. The brilliant panorama of London is over, and I have enjoyed more pleasure and have had more amusement, infinitely more than I expected, and received more attention, more kindness than I could have thought it possible would be shown to me; I have enjoyed the delight of seeing my father esteemed and honoured by

[1] Among the poor people Mr. Edgeworth was always the "Counsellor," because, when called to the bar, his father, who was anxious he should distinguish himself as a lawyer, spoke of him as his "Young Counsellor."

the best judges in England: I have felt the pleasure of seeing my true friend and mother, for she has been a mother to me, appreciated in the best society, and now with the fulness of content I return home, loving my own friends and my own mode of life preferably to all others, after comparison with all that is fine and gay, and rich and rare.

"We spent four days at Clifton with Emmeline, and if our journey to England had been productive of no other good, I should heartily rejoice at our having accomplished this purpose. My father was pleased and happy, and liked all his three grandchildren very much. You may imagine how much pleasure this gave me.

"We came here the day before yesterday, and have spent our time delightfully with Anna and her children, and now the carriage is at the door to take us to Mrs. Clifford's. Yesterday we went to see Samuel Essington,[1] at the Essington hotel. He thought it was a carriage full of strangers and was letting down the steps when he beheld my father; his whole face glowed with delight, and the tears stood in his projecting eyes. 'Master! Master, I declare! O, sir, ma'am, miss, Mrs. Beddoes, Miss Edgeworth: how glad I am!'

"He showed us his excellent house, and walked us round his beautiful little lawn and shrubberies, all his own making; and cut moss roses and blush roses for us with such eagerness and delight. 'And all, all owing to you, sir, that first taught me.'"

At Mrs. Clifford's we stayed some days—a beautiful

[1] The servant who was so faithful and so frightened at the time of the rebellion. He had saved some money and quitted our service in 1800.

country not far from Ross which we visited, and Maria was delighted to see all the scenes of the Man of Ross. At Mrs. Clifford's we had one day of most brilliant conversation between Maria, her father, and Sir James Macintosh, who had just come into that neighbourhood. He joined us, unexpectedly, one morning as we were walking out, and touching a shawl Mrs. Clifford wore, "A thousand looms," he said, "are at work in Cashmere at this instant providing these for you."

To Miss Sneyd,
at Edgeworthstown.

"*Mrs. Clifford's, June,* 1813,
"*Saturday Evening.*

"Received Sneyd's letter. Astonishment! Dear Sneyd, I hope he will be as happy as love and fortune can make him. All my ideas are thrown into such confusion by this letter that I *can* no more. We go to Derby on Tuesday."

We had, as Maria mentions in her letter from Derby, met there Miss Broadhurst. Maria says, 'not *my* Miss Broadhurst;' but this letter from Sneyd informed us that she was to be his. We had been much prepossessed in her favour by her charming manners, and agreeable conversation, and we now went back to Derby to become better acquainted with her. The name was the more remarkable to us because it was by an accident that Maria adopted it in the Absentee; it had been originally Broad*head,* when I told her there was a famous fashionable Mrs. Broadhead giving parties in London, so she, to save trouble in altering it, only scratched out

the *head* and put in *hurst*. In the story Miss Broadhurst selects from her lovers one who unites *worth* and *wit;* an old epigram of Mr. Edgeworth's on himself, concluded with,

"There's an edge to his wit and there's worth in his heart."

To Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, July* 26, 1813.

"I have delayed a few days writing to you in the expectation of the arrival of two frankers to send an extract from Dr. Holland's last letter, which will, I hope, entertain you as much as it entertained us. I shall long to hear of our good friend Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton's visit to Black Castle.

"We have every reason to be in great anxiety at this moment about a certain trunk containing all our worldly *duds,* and Patronage to boot, but still I have not been able to work myself into any fears about it, though it is a month since we ought to have seen it, nor have we heard any news of it. In the mean time, as I cannot set about revising Patronage, I have begun a new series of Early Lessons,[1] for which many mothers told me they wished. I feel that I return with fresh pleasure to literary work from having been so long idle, and I have a famishing appetite for reading. All that we saw in London, I am sure I enjoyed while it was passing as much as possible, but I should be very sorry to live in that whirling vortex, and I find my taste and conviction confirmed on my return to my natural friends and my dear home.

[1] The second parts of Frank, Rosamond, and Harry and Lucy.

"I am glad that some of those who showed us hospitality and kindness in England should have come so soon to Ireland, that we may have some little opportunity of showing our sense of their attentions. Lord Carrington, who franks this, is most amiable and benevolent, without any species of pretension, thinking the best that can be thought of everything and everybody. Mr. Smith, his son, whom we had not seen in London, accompanies him, and his tutor, Mr. Kaye, a Cambridge man, and Lord Gardner, Lord Carrington's son-in-law, suffering from the gouty rheumatism, or rheumatic gout—he does not know or care which: between the twitches of his suffering he is entertaining and agreeable. He told us the following memorable couplet by a noble author, dictated by the very genius of egotism:

> "'Pretty, pretty, pretty fly,
> If I were you, and you were I—
> But out upon't! this cannot be,
> I must remain Lord Salisbury!"

"We have just seen a journal by a little boy of eight years old, of a voyage from England to Sicily: the boy is Lord Mahon's son, Lord Carrington's grandson. It is one of the best journals I ever read, full of facts: exactly the writing of a child, but a very clever child. It is peculiarly interesting to us from having seen Dr. Holland's letters from Palermo. Lord Mahon says that the alarm about the plague at Malta is much greater than it need be—its progress has been stopped: it was introduced by a shoemaker having, contrary to law and reason, surreptitiously brought some handkerchiefs from a vessel that had not performed quarantine. You will nevertheless rejoice that Dr. Holland did not go to

Malta. How you will regret the loss of the portmanteau of which that vile Ali Pasha robbed him.

"Mr. Fox dined with us to-day, and was very agreeable. Lord Carrington and his travelling companions were at Farnham, where they were most hospitably received. They had no letters of introduction or intention of going there; but, finding a horrid inn at Cavan, they applied for charity to a gentleman for lodging. The gentleman took them to walk in Lord Farnham's grounds. Lord and Lady Farnham saw and invited them to the house, and they are full of admiration and almost affection, I think, for Lord and Lady Farnham: they are so charmed by their hospitality, their goodness to the poor, their care of the young Foxes, their magnificent establishment, their neat cottages for their tenants, and, as Lord Gardner sensibly said, 'their judicious economy in the midst of magnificence.'"

"*August* 9.

"I like Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton better than ever upon further acquaintance. She is what the French would call *bonne à vivre:* so good-humoured, so cheerful, so little disposed to exact attention or to take an authoritative tone in conversation, so ready to give everybody their merits, so indulgent for the follies and frailties, and so hopeful of the reformation of even the faults and vices of the world, that it is impossible not to respect and love her. She wins upon us daily, and mixes so well with this family, that I always forget she is a stranger.

"Lady Davy is in high glory at this moment, introducing Madame de Stael everywhere, enjoying the triumph and partaking the gale. They went down, a

delightful party, to Cobham—Madame de Stael, Lady Davy, Lord Erskine, Rogers, &c.

"Have you heard that Jeffrey, the reviewer, is gone to America in pursuit of a lady, or, as some say, to take possession of an estate left to him by an uncle: he is to be back in time for the 'Edinburgh Review' in September! I think we shall wait a month or two, however, for that number. We have at last heard of our trunks, and they will soon be here, and then I shall *fall to* at 'Patronage.' I have done almost a little volume of 'Frank.'"

"*August* 19.

"We have just heard from Sneyd: everything is going on as well as possible.

"Lord and Lady Lansdowne came to us on Tuesday. Mr. Greenough comes on Saturday, and after that I think we shall get to Black Castle. Lord Longford came yesterday, and though he is not, you know, exuberant in praise, truly says Lord and Lady Lansdowne are people who must be esteemed and liked the more they are known. Hercules Pakenham still suffers,—another splinter to come out.

"Mr. Forbes, just returned from Russia, has this moment come, and is giving a most interesting account of Petersburgh and Moscow: give me credit for retiring to finish this letter. My father is calling, calling, calling."

"*Nov.* 19.

"Last night a letter came from Lady Farnham, announcing Francis Fox's marriage, and naming next Monday for us to go to Farnham. We went last Mon-

day to a play at Castle Forbes, or rather to three farces —'Bombastes Furioso,' 'Of Age To-morrow,' and 'The Village Lawyer,' taken from the famous 'Avocat Patelin:' the cunning servant-boy shamming simplicity was admirably acted by Lord Rancliffe.

"Tell me whether you have seen Madame de Stael's 'Essai sur la Fiction,' prefixed to Zulma, Adelaide, and Pauline—the essay is excellent: I shall be curious to know whether you think as I do of Pauline. Madame de Stael calls Blenheim 'a magnificent tomb: splendour without, and the deathlike silence of ennui within.' She says she is very proud of having made the Duke of Marlborough speak four words. At the moment she was announced he was distinctly heard to utter these words: 'Let me go away.' We have just got her 'Allemagne.' We have had great delight in Mrs. Graham's 'India,'—a charming woman, writing, speaking, thinking, or feeling."

"*Nov.* 25.

"A letter from Lady Romilly—so easy, so like her conversation. All agree that Madame de Stael is frankness itself, and has an excellent heart. During her brilliant fortnight at Bowood, where, besides Madame de Stael, her Albertine, M. de Stael, and Count Palmella, there were the Romillys, the Macintoshes, Mr. Ward, Mr. Rogers, and M. Dumont—if it had not been for chess-playing, music, and dancing between times, poor human nature never could have borne the strain of attention and admiration.

"I send a letter of Mrs. Curwen's,[1] and I enclose two little pebbles: my dear aunt, take your choice of them,

[1] Mr. Curwen, of Workington, had paid us a visit this autumn.

and prevail on Mrs. O'Beirne to accept of the other. A gentleman who is an utter stranger to us all, a Mr. Macan who is now in India, sent me a present of a set of East Indian moccoes, as he called them, which he picked up on the banks of a river. I sent ten of them to Rundell and Bridge's to be set for my own family and my most *partial* friends, and on this last footing perhaps Mrs. O'Beirne will accept of one. As to you, my dear aunt, I know you will prick yourself continually with the pin of this brooch, for the sake of your little niece.

"The first volume of 'Patronage' is printed; two new volumes of 'Early Lessons' are also printing."

"*Jan.* 1, 1814.

"Hunter has sent a whole cargo of French translations—'Popular Tales,' with a title under which I should never have known them, 'Conseils à mon Fils!' 'Manœuvring;' 'La Mère Intrigante;' 'Ennui'—what can they make of it in French? 'Leonora' will translate better than a better thing. 'Emilie de Coulanges,' I fear, will never stand alone. 'L'Absent,' 'The Absentee,'—it is impossible that a Parisian can make any sense of it from beginning to end. But these things teach authors what is merely local and temporary. 'Les deux Griseldis de Chaucer et Edgeworth;' and, to crown all, two works surreptitiously printed in England under our name, and which are *no better than they should be.*

"Pray read 'Letters to Sir James Macintosh on Madame de Stael's Allemagne.' My mother says it is exactly what you would have written: we do not know who is the author.

"I have just heard what makes me very sad—the death of a friend—my darling little old woman, as I used to call her—polite, warm-hearted Mrs. Clifford, suddenly, of inflammation in her lungs; died in forty-eight hours."

"*Jan.* 25.

"To-day it began to thaw,[1] and thawed so rapidly, that we were in danger of being flooded, wet pouring in at all parts, and tubs, and jugs, and pails, and mops running about in all directions, and voices calling, and avalanches of snow thrown by arms of men from gutters and roofs on all sides, darkening windows, and falling with thundering noise.

"Tell my aunt that, as to the pressgang in 'Patronage,' I had hesitated at first, but thought it better to hazard it; because I think it becomes us not to flatter popular opinion to win favour, but to dare to say what we think the truth, and what may perhaps be useful. The late Lord Longford actually wept after having done his duty in pressing the Thames.

"We have been charmed with a little French play, 'Les deux Gendres.' I wish you could get it, and get Mr. Knox to read it to you: he is still blocked up by the snow at Pakenham Hall.

"We have had an entertaining letter, giving an account of a gentleman who is now in England, a native

[1] The snow began Christmas eve, 1813, and was in some places ten feet deep, blocking up all the roads, so that for many days no post came in, which was very tantalising, as we were expecting "Patronage;" and as the mail-bags could only be brought by a man on horseback, it was long before the large official packet came, the first volume of "Patronage."

of Delhi; practised as an advocate in the native courts of Calcutta, from Calcutta to Prince of Wales' Island, and thence to London, and is now Professor of Oriental Languages at Addiscombe. He was at Dr. Malkin's: Mrs. Malkin offered him coffee: he refused, and backed. 'Not coffee in the house of Madam-Doctor. I take coffee to keep awake; no danger of being drowsy in the house of Madam-Doctor.' He was at a great ball where Lord Cornwallis was expected, and he said he would go to him and 'bless his father's memory for his conduct in India.'

"Poor old Robin Woods is very ill, and he has a tame robin that sits on his foot, and hops up for crumbs. One day that I went in, when they were at dinner with a bowl of potatoes between them, I said, 'How happy you two look!' 'Yes, miss, we were that every day since we married.'"

To Mrs. Ruxton.

"15, *Baggot Street,*[1] *Dublin,*
"*March,* 1814.

"Here we are: arrived at three o'clock: found Henrica looking very well. Such a nice, pretty, elegant house! and they have furnished it so comfortably. It is delightful to see my father here; he enjoys himself so much in his son's house, and Sneyd and Henrica are so happy seeing him pleased with everything. Lady Longford has been here this morning: told us Sir Edward Pakenham was so fatigued by riding an uneasy horse at the battle of Vittoria, he was not able to join

[1] Mr. and Mrs. Sneyd Edgeworth's house in Dublin.

for four days. A buckle of Lord Wellington's sword-belt saved him: he wrote four times in one week to Lady Wellington, without ever mentioning his wound. I long for you to see Henrica; she is so kind, and so well-bred and easy in her manners."

In April Mr. Edgeworth had a dangerous illness—violent internal inflammation, and Maria's letters were for some weeks only bulletins of his health. He was just out of danger, when, late at night, on the 10th of May, Lovell arrived from Paris, liberated by the peace after eleven years' detention.

Maria to Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, May* 16, 1814.

"My father's contentment at Lovell's return has done him more good than all the advice of all the surgeons, I do believe, now that the danger is over. If you have suffered from suspense in absence, yet, my dear aunt, you have been spared the torturing terrors we have felt at the sight of the daily, hourly changes, so rapid, so unaccountable: one day, one hour all hope, the next all despair! The lamp of life, now bright, starting up high and brilliant, then sinking suddenly almost to extinction; the flame flitting, flickering, starting, *leaping*, as it were, on and off by fits. Some day we shall talk it over in security; now I can hardly bear to look back to it.

"All that has passed in France in the last few weeks! a revolution without bloodshed! Paris taken without being pillaged! the Bourbons, after all hope and season

for hope had passed, restored to their capital and their palaces! With what mixed sensations they must enter those palaces! I dare say it has not escaped my aunt that the Venus de Medicis and Apollo Belvidere are both missing together: I make no remarks. I hate scandal—at least I am not so fond of it as the lady of whom it was said she could not see the poker and tongs standing together without suspecting something wrong! I wonder where our ideas, especially those of a playful sort, go at some times? and how it is that they all come junketing back faster than there is room for them at other times? How is it that hope so powerfully excites, and fear so absolutely depresses all our faculties?"

"*Aug.* 24.

"Sneyd has received a very polite letter from the Marquis de Bonay, who is now ambassador at the Court of Denmark. Mrs. O'Beirne and the Bishop, who like Mons. de Bonay so much, and who have not heard of him for such a length of time, will be delighted to hear of his emerging into light and life. What is more to our purpose is, that he says he can furnish Sneyd with some notes for the Abbé Edgeworth's life, which he had once intended to write himself: he did put a short notice of his life into the foreign papers at Mittau. He says he never knew so perfect a human creature as the Abbé.

"I had a letter from Dr. Holland this morning, saying at the beginning I should be surprised at its contents; and so I was. The Princess of Wales has invited him to accompany her abroad as her physician!

After consulting with his friends, he accepted the invitation."

Maria would not have advised Dr. Holland to accept this situation. The Princess of Wales had, when we were in London, signified to Maria her wish to see her. She did not at all like to visit the Princess, her father and I fully agreed with her, but we feared that from Royalty a request must be considered a command. We consulted Lady Wellington, who referred the case to Lady Liverpool, then considered as the best authority on points of etiquette, and she ruled that Miss Edgeworth might decline the invitation by the simple form of "sorry she can't,"—"previous engagement," &c. She wrote to that effect to the Princess, and heard no more of the matter.

To Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Oct.* 13, 1814.

"I had a letter from the Duchess of Wellington the day before yesterday, dated from Deal, just when she was going to embark for France. The whole of the letter was full of her children and of sorrow for quitting them.

"Two days ago came a young gentleman, Mr. James Gordon, a nephew of Lady Elizabeth Whitbread's, with a very polite introductory note from Lady Elizabeth. He has a great deal of anecdote and information. He has just come from Paris, and he has given me a better account of Paris, and more characteristic, well-authenticated anecdotes than I have heard from anybody else.

He mentioned some instances of the gratitude which Louis XVIII. has shown to people of inferior note in England from whom he had received kindness, especially to the innkeeper's wife at Berkhampstead. I am glad for the honour of human nature that this is so.

"What do you think Walter Scott says is the most poetical performance he has read for years? That account of the battle of Leipsic which Richard lent to us."

"We went to Coolure and had a pleasant day. Mr. and Mrs. Pollard dined and spent the evening: they all seemed pleased at this marriage. Waverley was in everybody's hands. The Admiral does not like it: the hero, he says, is such a shuffling fellow. While he was saying this I had in my pocket a letter from Miss Fanshaw, received that morning, saying it was delightful. Lady Crewe tells me that Madame D'Arblay cannot settle in England because the King of France has lately appointed M. D'Arblay to some high situation in consequence of his distinguished services."

"A letter from Mrs. O'Beirne, with all that warmth of heart which distinguishes her, telling of Miss Wren's visit to her relations at Wroxall Abbey.

"Shall I tell you what they, my father and all of them are doing at this moment? Sprawling on the floor looking at a new rat-trap. Two pounds of butter vanished the other night out of the dairy; they had been put in a shallow pan with water in it, and it is averred the rats ate it, and Peggy Tuite, the dairymaid, to make the thing more credible, gives the following reason for the rats' conduct. 'Troth, ma'am, they were affronted at the new rat-trap, they only licked the

milk off of it, and that occasioned them to run off with the butter!'

"Mr. and Mrs. Pollard have spent a day here, and brought with them Miss Napier. My father is charmed with her beauty, her voice, and her manners. We talked over Waverley with her. Mrs. O'Beirne tells me she likes it hugely. I am more delighted with it than I can tell you: it is a work of first-rate genius."

Mr. Lockhart, in his Life of Sir Walter Scott (Vol. iii. p. 303,) says that Scott had desired James Ballantyne to send to Miss Edgeworth a copy of "Waverley" on its first appearance, inscribed "from the author," and that she "thanked the nameless novelist, under cover to Ballantyne, with the cordial generosity of kindred genius." But Maria had not received this gift when she wrote to the Great Unknown late at night in all the first fervour of admiration as we ended the story. She began to write, before she had heard the "Postscript," and as Mr. Edgeworth had exclaimed as I closed the volume, "Aut Scotus aut Diabolus," Maria placed these words at the top of her letter: before she finished it, I opened the book again and said, "There is a postscript by way of preface," which rather unwillingly she stopped to hear.

To the Author of Waverley.

"*Edgeworthstown, Oct.* 23, 1814.

"Aut Scotus, aut Diabolus!

"We have this moment finished 'Waverley.' It was read aloud to this large family, and I wish the author could have witnessed the impression it made—

the strong hold it seized of the feelings both of young and old—the admiration raised by the beautiful descriptions of nature—by the new and bold delineations of character—the perfect manner in which every character is sustained in every change of situation from first to last, without effort, without the affectation of making the persons speak in character—the ingenuity with which each person introduced in the drama is made useful and necessary to the end—the admirable art with which the story is constructed and with which the author keeps his own secrets till the precise proper moment when they should be revealed, whilst in the meantime, with the skill of Shakspear, the mind is prepared by unseen degrees for all the changes of feeling and fortune, so that nothing, however extraordinary, shocks us as improbable: and the interest is kept up to the last moment. We were so possessed with the belief that the whole story and every character in it was real, that we could not endure the occasional addresses from the author to the reader. They are like Fielding: but for that reason we cannot bear them, we cannot bear that an author of such high powers, of such original genius, should for a moment stoop to imitation. This is the only thing we dislike, these are the only passages we wish omitted in the whole work: and let the unqualified manner in which I say this, and the very vehemence of my expression of this disapprobation, be a sure pledge to the author of the sincerity of all the admiration I feel for his genius.

"I have not yet said half we felt in reading the work. The characters are not only finely drawn as separate figures, but they are grouped with great skill, and contrasted so artfully, and yet so naturally as to produce

the happiest dramatic effect, and at the same time to relieve the feelings and attention in the most agreeable manner. The novelty of the Highland world which is discovered to our view excites curiosity and interest powerfully: but though it is all new to us, it does not embarrass, or perplex, or strain the attention. We never are harassed by doubts of the probability of any of these modes of life: though we did not know them, we are quite certain they did exist exactly as they are represented. We are sensible that there is a peculiar merit in the work which is in a measure lost upon us, the *dialects* of the Highlanders, and the Lowlanders, &c. But there is another and a higher merit with which we are as much struck and as much delighted as any true born Scotchman could be: the various gradations of Scotch feudal character, from the highborn chieftain and the military baron, to the noble-minded lieutenant Evan Dhu, the robber Bean Lean, and the savage Callum Beg. The *Pre*—the Chevalier is beautifully drawn—

'A prince: aye, every inch a prince!'

His polished manners, his exquisite address, politeness and generosity, interest the reader irresistibly, and he pleases the more from the contrast between him and those who surround him. I think he is my favourite character: the Baron Bradwardine is my father's. He thinks it required more genius to invent, and more ability uniformly to sustain this character than any one of the masterly characters with which the book abounds. There is indeed uncommon art in the manner in which his dignity is preserved by his courage and magnanimity, in spite of all his pedantry and his *ridicules*, and his

bear and bootjack, and all the raillery of Mc Ivor.—Mc Ivor's unexpected 'bear and bootjack' made us laugh heartily.

"But to return to the dear good baron: though I acknowledge that I am not as good a judge as my father and brothers are of his recondite learning and his law Latin, yet I feel the humour, and was touched to the quick by the strokes of generosity, gentleness and pathos in this old man, who is by-the-bye, all in good time worked up into a very dignified father-in-law for the hero. His exclamation of 'Oh! my son! my son!' and the yielding of the fictitious character of the baron to the natural feelings of the father is beautiful. (Evan Dhu's fear that his father-in-law should die quietly in his bed, made us laugh almost as much as the bear and bootjack.)

"Jinker, in the battle, pleading the cause of the mare he had sold to Balmawhapple, and which had thrown him for want of the proper bit, is truly comic: my father says that this and some other passages respecting horsemanship could not have been written by any one who was not master both of the great and little horse.

"I tell you without order the great and little strokes of humour and pathos just as I recollect, or am reminded of them at this moment by my companions. The fact is that we have had the volumes only during the time we could read them, and as fast as we could read, lent to us as a great favour by one who was happy enough to have secured a copy before the first and second editions were sold in Dublin. When we applied, not a copy could be had; we expect one in the course of next week, but we resolved to write to the author

without waiting for a second perusal. Judging by our own feeling as authors, we guess that he would rather know our genuine first thoughts, than wait for cool second thoughts, or have a regular eulogium or criticism put in the most lucid manner, and given in the finest sentences that ever were rounded.

"Is it possible that I have got thus far without having named Flora or Vich Ian Vohr—the *last Vich Ian Vohr!* Yet our minds were full of them the moment before I began this letter: and could you have seen the tears forced from us by their fate, you would have been satisfied that the pathos went to our hearts. Ian Vohr from the first moment he appears, till the last, is an admirably drawn and finely sustained character—new, perfectly new to the English reader—often entertaining —always heroic—sometimes sublime. The grey spirit, the Bodach Glas, thrills *us* with horror. *Us!* What effect must it have upon those under the influence of the superstitions of the Highlands? This circumstance is admirably introduced: this superstition is a weakness quite consistent with the strength of the character, perfectly natural after the disappointment of all his hopes, in the dejection of his mind, and the exhaustion of his bodily strength.

"Flora, we could wish was never called *Miss Mac Ivor,* because in this country there are tribes of vulgar Miss *Macs,* and this association is unfavourable to the sublime and beautiful of *your* Flora—she is a true heroine. Her first appearance seized upon the mind and enchanted us so completely, that we were certain she was to be your heroine, and the wife of your hero —but with what inimitable art, you gradually convince the reader that she was not, as she said of herself,

capable of making Waverley happy: leaving her in full possession of our admiration, you first make us pity, then love, and at last give our undivided affection to Rose Bradwardine—sweet Scotch Rose! The last scene between Flora and Waverley is highly pathetic—my brother wishes that *bridal garment* were *shroud:* because when the heart is touched we seldom use metaphor, or quaint alliteration: bride-favour, bridal garment.

"There is one thing more we could wish changed or omitted in Flora's character. I have not the volume, and therefore cannot refer to the page: but I recollect in the first visit to Flora, when she is to sing certain verses, there is a walk, in which the description of the place is beautiful, but *too long,* and we did not like the preparation for *a scene*—the appearance of Flora and her harp was too like a common heroine, she should be far above all stage effect or novelist's trick.

"These are, without reserve, the only faults we found, or *can* find in this work of genius. We should scarcely have thought them worth mentioning, except to give you proof positive that we are not flatterers. Believe me, I have not, nor can I convey to you the full idea of the pleasure, the delight we have had in reading 'Waverley,' nor of the feeling of sorrow with which we came to the end of the history of persons whose real presence had so filled our minds—we felt that we must return to the *flat realities* of life, that our stimulus was gone, and we were little disposed to read the 'Postscript, which should have been a Preface.'

"'Well, let us hear it,' said my father, and Mrs. Edgeworth read on.

"Oh! my dear sir, how much pleasure would my

father, my mother, my whole family, as well as myself have lost, if we had not read to the last page! And the pleasure came upon us so unexpectedly—we had been so completely absorbed that every thought of ourselves, of our own authorship, was far, far away.

"Thank you for the honour you have done us, and for the pleasure you have given us, great in proportion to the opinion we had formed of the work we had just perused—and believe me, every opinion I have in this letter expressed, was formed before any individual in the family had peeped to the end of the book, or knew how much we owed you.

"Your obliged and grateful

"Maria Edgeworth."

Mrs. Beddoes was at this time residing at Bath, and on the Bishop of Meath and his family going there, Maria sent a note of introduction for her sister.

To Mrs. O'Beirne.

"*Edgeworthstown, Dec.* 16, 1814.

"My dear Mrs. O'Beirne,

"Give me leave to present to you my dear sister, Anna Beddoes. Many people have told me there is a resemblance between us. This has always been a flattering idea to me, and I am sure it will in the present instance be gratifying to her if it should induce you to see and hear her with that partial kindness with which you have honoured

"Your affectionate

"Maria Edgeworth."

To Miss Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Dec.* 26, 1814.

"'A merry Christmas and a happy New Year' to you, my dear Sophy, and to my aunt, and uncle, and Margaret. I have just risen from my bed, where I had been a day and a half with a violent headache and pains, or as John Langan calls them, *pins* in my bones. We have been much entertained with Mansfield Park. Pray read 'Eugène et Guillaume,' a modern 'Gil Blas;' too much of opera intrigues, but on the whole it is a work of admirable ability. Guillaume's character beautiful, and the gradual deterioration of Eugène's character finely drawn; but the following it out becomes at last as disgusting and horrible as it would be to see the corruption of the body after the spirit had fled."

"*January*, 1815.

"I send you some beautiful lines to Lord Byron, by Miss Macpherson, daughter of Sir James Macpherson. As soon as my father hears from the Dublin Society we shall go to Dublin."

Mr. and Mrs. Sneyd Edgeworth having gone to England in January, they lent their house in Dublin to Mr. Edgeworth, who had been requested by the Dublin Society to try some experiments on wheel carriages, which he did very successfully. Maria and I accompanied him, with Honora and my two eldest girls.

To Miss Ruxton.

"15, *Baggot Street, Dublin,*
"*Feb.*, 1815.

"Our time here has been much more agreeably spent than I had any hopes it would be. My father has been pleased at some dinners at Mr. Knox's, Mr. Leslie Foster's, and at the Solicitor General's. Lady Longford is getting well. Mrs. Stewart is admirable, and Caroline Hamilton the most entertaining and agreeable *good* person I ever saw; she is as good as any saint, and as gay, and much gayer, than any sinner I ever happened to see, male or female.

"The Beauforts are at Mrs. Waller's: they came up in a hurry, summoned by a Mrs. Codd, an American, or from America, who has come over to claim a considerable property, and wants to be identified. She went a journey when she was thirteen, with Doctor and Mrs. Beaufort and my mother, and they are the only people in this country who can and will swear *to* her and *for* her. I will tell you when we meet of her entrée with Sir Simon Bradstreet,—and I will tell you of Honora's treading on the parrot at Mrs. Westby's party,—and I will tell you of Fenaigle and his A B C. I think him very stupid. Heaven grant me the power of forgetting his Art of Memory."

The rest of our stay in Dublin was saddened by news of the fatal attack on New Orleans, and the death of Sir Edward Pakenham, to whom Mr. Edgeworth had been much attached. He was very ill himself most part of the time, and the Duke of Dorset's being

killed out hunting near Dublin threw a gloom over society.

To C. S. Edgeworth.

"*Black Castle, May* 10, 1815.

"We, that is my father, mother, little Harriet, and I, went on Sunday last to Castletown—the two days we spent there, delightful. Lady Louisa Connolly is one of the most respectable, amiable, and even at seventy, I may say, charming persons I ever saw or heard. Having known all the most worthy, as well as the most celebrated people who have lived for the last fifty years, she is full of characteristic anecdote, and fuller of that indulgence for human creatures which is consistent with a thorough knowledge of the world, and a quick perception of all the foibles of human nature—with a high sense of religion, without the slightest tincture of ostentation, asperity, or bigotry. She is all that I could have wished to represent in Mrs. Hungerford, and her figure and countenance gave me back the image in my mind.

"Her niece, Miss Emily Napier, is graceful, amiable, and very engaging.

"My father went home with Harriet direct from Castletown, but begged my mother and me to return to Dublin for a fancy ball. We did not go to the Rotunda, but saw enough of it at Mrs. Power's. Lady Clarke (Lady Morgan's sister,) as 'Mrs. Flannigan, a half gentlewoman, from Tipperary,' speaking an admirable brogue, was by far the best character, and she had presence of mind and a great deal of real humour—her husband attending her with kitten and macaw.

"Next to her Mr. Robert Langrishe, as a Frenchwoman, admirably dressed. Mrs. Airey was a Turkish lady, in a superb dress, given to her by Ali Pasha. There were *thatched* 'Wild Men from the North,' dancing and stamping with whips and clumping of the feet, from which Mrs. Bushe and I fled whenever they came near us. Having named Mrs. Bushe, I must mention that whenever I have met her, she has been my delight and admiration from her wit, humour, and variety of conversation."

To Miss Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Aug.*, 1815.

"I send a note from Lady Romilly, and one from Mr. Whishaw: the four travellers mentioned in that note called upon us yesterday,—Mr. and Mrs. Smith, of Easton Grey, Miss Bayley, and Mr. Fuller. Mrs. Smith is stepdaughter to a certain Mrs. Chandler, who was very kind to me at Mrs. Day's, and I was heartily glad to see her daughter, even stepdaughter, at Edgeworthstown, and *my* kind, dear, best of stepmothers, seconded my intentions to my very heart's wish: I am sure they went away satisfied. I gave them a note to Lady Farnham, which will I think produce a note of admiration! While these visitors were with us Mrs. Moutray came over from Lissard, and we rejoiced in pride of soul to show them our Irish Madame de Sevigné. *Her* Madame de Grignan is more agreeable than ever. Mrs. Moutray told me of a curious debate she heard between Lady C. Campbell, Lady Glenbervie, and others, on the Modern Griselda, with another lady, and a wager

laid that she would not read it out to her husband. Wager lost by skipping.

"Lord Carrington's present to the village library is beautifully bound, as well as well chosen: Spectator, all Johnson's works, all Shakespear, best editions.

"I have sent a copy of the third edition of 'Patronage' to the Bishop of Meath, at Cheltenham."

In this edition the end of the story is altered, Mr. Percy is not put in prison, and Caroline goes abroad with Count Altenburg:—an improvement on the original, in which she remains with her father: but Maria made the change with much hesitation, as she doubted the propriety of making so complete an alteration after a work had been absolutely before the public. Her father approved of the alteration, and critics have since applauded it. She was anxious all this year about Mr. Edgeworth, who was very unwell, and her letters are chiefly taken up with reports of his health.

To Mrs. Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, Sept.*, 1815.

"My father, I have the delight to tell you, is better. In the midst of this illness, which would depress and extinguish any spirits and any energy but his, he has with wonderful vivacity and perseverance made occupation and interests for himself. Never did the blessings of a cultivated understanding and affectionate heart appear in a more striking light.

"John Leslie Foster has just spent two days with us, and was as kind and as respectfully affectionate to my father as you remember him when he was here at the

time of my father's first illness. Full of information of all sorts. I should fill ten pages if I were to repeat all he told us; so leaving that impossibility without trying to trample upon it with my poor little feet, I proceed to a walk on the Bachelor's Walk,[1] which as Sneyd made it while a bachelor, will always be so called; and I was telling Mr. Foster of the extraordinary variety of people who had walked with us on this walk one day two years ago,—Lord and Lady Lansdowne, Sir George Staunton, Mr. Guillemard, Mr. Hutton, Mr. Strangways, and Mr. Greenough, when James came running to call us home. 'My master begs you will come back directly to Mrs. Byrne, of Cabinteely.'[2]

"So clapping my hands in anticipation of the comedy or farce we were going to enjoy, we went home. A glorious barouche at the hall door: but, O! my dear aunt, the comedy was turned to tragedy; and I never was more shocked than when I beheld her altered, death-like figure; a person, a face so altered in the course of a few months I never beheld. She was supported with cushions upon the sofa, wrapped in a dressing-gown. A close cap partly hid her hollow cheeks, the fatal hectic spot was visible, and her dark supernaturally animated eyes reminded me of Mrs. Elizabeth Edgeworth. When I touched her burning, white, trembling hand, I felt that it was all over with her. Her two daughters were with her. She had intended only to call here to rest herself, and to sleep at Granard, on her way to Mr.

[1] The Bachelor's Walk was a raised path across the fields, which Sneyd made in 1808 for the poor people coming to the village, and its name of Bachelor's Walk is suitable in opposition to that by which the women go to the well, which is the Maid's Walk.

[2] Maria had met Mrs. Byrne in Dublin, and had been delighted with her beauty, wit, and powers of amusing conversation.

Pallas, at Scrabby. But my father and mother had rather too much humanity to let her go to sleep in such an inn as that at Granard. Mr. Foster with alert goodnature ran directly to move his goods, that the mother and daughters might have the two rooms opening into each other. They stayed here, and the next morning when the cold fit came on, and Mrs. Byrne's eyes, horribly dark, were without one spark of that fire which had illuminated them; I absolutely thought she would have expired leaning her head upon me. However, her daughters said that the motion of the carriage was the best thing for her, and into the carriage she was with difficulty put. I think it hardly possible she can be alive a week hence.

"And now prudence forbids and inclination prompts me to go on to another history of another baroucheful of strangers, who appeared this morning just as we were sitting down to breakfast,—Sir Neil O'Donnell and Mr. Bald, the engineer; but I will only name their names, for here is Lady Anne Maxwell, and the day is gone."

"*October* 16.

"I send you a letter of Joanna Baillie's; her simple style is so different from the *fine* or the *gossip* style.

"Did you ever hear this epigram, a translation from Martial?

> 'Their utmost power the gods have shown,
> In turning Niobe to stone:
> But man's superior power you see,
> Who turns a stone to Niobe.'

"Here is an epigram quite to my taste, elegant and witty, without ill-nature or satire.

"Barry Fox has come home with his regiment, and is very gentlemanlike."

Captain Fox had been serving in Canada, when on Buonaparte's return from Elba his regiment, the 97th, was summoned home, but when the transport entered Plymouth harbour, and the officers were told that BUONAPARTE was in the vessel they had just sailed past, they thought it an absurd jest.

"*January* 10, 1816.

"Honora[1] has not yet returned. The authoress of 'Pride and Prejudice' has been so good as to send to me a new novel just published, 'Emma.' We are reading 'France in 1814 and 1815,' by young Alison and Mr. Tytler: the first volume good. We are also reading a book which delights us all, though it is on a subject which you will think little likely to be interesting to us, and on which we had little or no previous knowledge. I bought it on Mr. Brinkley's recommendation, and have not repented, and wish Richard would buy it on my recommendation, and I think I can promise he would not repent—'Cuvier's Theory of the Earth.' It is admirably written, with such perfect clearness as to be intelligible to the meanest, and satisfactory to the highest capacity.

"I have enlarged my plan of plays, which are not now to be for young people merely, but rather 'Popular Plays,'[2] for the same class as 'Popular Tales.' Excuse

[1] Admiral and Mrs. Pakenham had called on us on their way from Garbally on Christmas Eve, and taken Honora with them for a ball at Castle Pollard on the 26th. Heavy snow came on that night, and it was three weeks before the roads were passable for her return.

[2] Published in 1817, in one volume, containing "Love and Law,"

huddling things together. Mrs. O'Beirne, of Newry, who has been here, told us a fact apropos to the Limerick gloves. A man near Granard robbed a farmer of thirty guineas, and hid them in a hole in the church wall. He was hurried out of the country by some accident before he could take off his treasure, and wrote to the man he had robbed and told him where he had hid the money: 'Since it can be of no use to me you may as well have it.' The owner of the money set to work *grouting* under the church wall, and many of the good people of Granard were seized with Mr. Hill's fear there was a plot to undermine the church, and a great piece of work about it."

"*March* 21.

"Thank you for Les Girouettes: I am sorry to see that even the best of that versatile nation have two or three changes. I do not think the book at all well done, it is very confused; the *vane* should have been put before each of the changes. The book has the fault which we observed in all French conversation about politics—it refers constantly to events by their dates; this habit arose from the fear of mentioning persons, and is very puzzling to me.

"I send a letter of Mrs. O'Beirne's, telling of Archdeacon de Lacy's[1] marrying Madame de Stael's daughter

"The Two Guardians," and "The Rose, Thistle, and Shamrock." In subsequent editions of Maria's works, "The Two Guardians" was omitted.

[1] It happened that when Albertine de Stael was to be married to M. de Broglie, at Florence, the only Protestant clergyman to be had was our fellow-countyman, Archdeacon De Lacy, son-in-law to Mrs. Moutray, the friend of Nelson and Collingwood.

to the Duc de Broglie! My father is pretty well to-day, and has been looking at a fine bed of crocuses in full blow in my garden, and is now gone out in the carriage, and I must have a *scene* ready for him on his return."

"I have been ever since you were here mending up the little plays: cobbling work, which takes a great deal of time, and makes no show. I shall go back to my Jewess with double pleasure."

It was in January, 1816, that Maria received a letter from Miss Rachel Mordecai, of Richmond, Virginia, gently reproaching her with having so often made Jews ridiculous in her writings, and asking her to give a story with a good Jew. This was the origin of "Harrington," and the commencement of a correspondence with Miss Mordecai, and of the friendship of her family, which was so much valued by Maria, and which I enjoy to this day.

"*July* 24.

"Mr. Strutt and his son have within these few minutes arrived here. He wrote only yesterday to say that being at Liverpool, he would not be so near Ireland without going to Edgeworthstown: I hope my father may be able to enjoy their company, but he was very ill all last night and this morning."

"*August* 25.

"I lose not a moment, my dearest aunt, in communicating to you a piece of intelligence which I am sure will give you pleasure: Lord Longford is going to be married—to Lady Georgiana Lygon, daughter of Lord

Beauchamp. You will be glad to see the letter Lord Longford wrote upon the occasion.

"Boyce's[1] ivory ball and agate handles and ivory fans have all safely arrived. Everybody is writing and talking about Lord Byron, but I am tired of the subject. *The all for murder, all for crime* system of poetry will now go out of fashion: as long as he appeared an outrageous mad villain he might have ridden triumphant on the storm, but he has now shown himself too base, too mean, too contemptible for anything like an heroic devil. Pray if you have an opportunity, read Haygarth's poem of 'Greece.' I like it much, I like the mind that produced it: the poetry is not always good, but there is a *spirit* through the whole that sustains it and that elevates and invigorates the mind of the reader."

"*Sept.* 18.

"You know, my dear aunt, it is a favourite opinion of my father's that *things come in bundles:* that *people* come in bundles is, I think, true, as, after having lived without seeing a creature but our own family for months, a press of company comes all at once. The very day after the Brinkleys had come to us, and filled every nook in the house, the enclosed letter was brought to me. I was in my own little den, just beginning to write for an hour, as my father had requested I would,

[1] The young man mentioned before as having been employed by my brother in the telegraphic operations here, and as having been afterwards in the telegraphic service at Bombay. When Mr. Edgeworth asked Sir James Macintosh if he had ever heard of him, he exclaimed, "Mr. Boyce! my best juryman." He sent over to me a large box of inlaid Indian work, with one of the beautiful ivory carved balls-within-balls, and several other valuable curiosities.

'let who would be in the house.' On opening the letter and seeing the signature of Ward, I was in hopes it was the Mr. Ward who made the fine speech and wrote the review of 'Patronage' in the 'Quarterly,' and of whom Madame de Stael said that he was the only man in England who really understood the art of conversation. However, upon re-examining the signature, I found that our gentleman who was waiting at the gate for an answer was another Ward, who is called 'the great R. Ward'—a very gentlemanlike, agreeable man, full of anecdotes, bon-mots, and compliments. I wish you had been here, for I think you would have been entertained much, not only by his conversation, but by his character: I never saw a man who had lived in the world so anxious about the opinions which are formed of him by those with whom he is conversing, so quick at discovering, by the countenance and by *implication*, what is thought of him, or so incessantly alert in guarding all the suspected places in your opinion. He disclaimed memory, though he has certainly the very best of memories for wit and bon-mots that man was ever blessed with. Mr. Ward was Under-Secretary of State during a great part of Pitt's administration, and has been one of the Lords of the Admiralty, and is now Clerk of the Ordnance, and has been sent to Ireland to reform abuses in the Ordnance. He speaks well, and in an agreeable voice. He told me that he had heard in London that I had a sort of Memoria Technica, by which I could remember everything that was said in conversation, and by certain motions of my fingers could, while people were talking to me, note down all the ridiculous points!! He happened to have passed some time in his early life at Lichfield, and knew Miss

Seward, and Dr. Darwin, and various people my father and aunts knew; so this added to his power of making himself agreeable. Of all the multitude of good things he told us, I can only at this moment recollect the lines which he repeated, by Dr. Mansel, the Bishop of Bristol, on Miss Seward and Mr. Hayley's flattery of each other:—

"'Prince of poets, England's glory,
Mr. Hayley, *that* is you!'
'Ma'am, you carry all before you,
Lichfield swan, indeed you do!'
'In epic, elegy, or sonnet,
Mr. Hayley, you're divine!'
'Madam, take my word upon it,
You yourself are all the Nine.'"

"Some of his stories at dinner were so entertaining, that even old George's face cut in wood could not stand it; and John Bristow and the others were so bewildered, I thought the second course would never be on the table.

"Torrents of rain—what will become of the poor crops! Good-bye, I must go to the Jews."

"*Nov.* 18.

"Here are some lines of my father's on Sir Humphry Davy which I think you will like. Lovell and his school go on admirably. My father is pretty well except his eyes: his sight is dreadfully bad. I hope to finish the Jew in three or four days: I have been shamefully long about it.

"We are reading one of the most entertaining and interesting and NEW books I ever read in my life—'Tully's Residence in Tripoli,' written by the sister of the consul, who resided there for ten years, spoke the language, and was admitted to a constant intercourse

with the ladies of the seraglio, who are very different from any seraglio ladies we ever before heard of. No Arabian tale is equal in magnificence and entertainment; no tragedy superior in strength of interest to the tragedy recorded in the last ten pages of this incomparable book. Some people affect to disbelieve, and say it is manufactured; but it would be a miracle that it was invented with such consistency."

"*Jan.*, 1817.

"Mr. Knox has come and gone: two of the plays were read to him. My father gave him a sketch of each, and desired him to choose: he chose the genteel comedy, 'The Two Guardians,' and I read it; and those who sat by told me afterwards that Mr. Knox's countenance showed he was much amused, and that he had great sympathy. For my part, I had a *glaze* before my eyes, and never once saw him while I was reading. He made some good criticisms, and in consequence I altered one scene, and dragged out Arthur Onslow by the head and heels—the good boy of the piece; and we found he was never missed, but the whole much lightened by throwing this heavy character overboard. Next night 'The Rose, Thistle, and Shamrock:' Mr. Knox laughed, and seemed to enjoy it much."

On the 16th of February Maria read out to her father the first chapter of "Ormond" in the carriage going to Pakenham Hall to see Lord Longford's bride. It was the last visit that Mr. Edgeworth paid anywhere. He had expressed a wish to Maria that she should write a story as a companion to "Harrington," and in all her anguish of mind at his state of health, she, by a wonderful effort of affection and genius, produced those gay

and brilliant pages—some of the gayest and most brilliant she ever composed. The interest and delight which her father, ill as he was, took in this beginning, encouraged her to go on, and she completed the story. The admirable characters of King Corny and Sir Ulick O'Shane, and all the wonderful scenes full of wit, humour, and feeling, were written in agony of anxiety, with trembling hand and tearful eyes. As she finished chapter after chapter, she read them out—the whole family assembling in her father's room to listen to them. Her father enjoyed these readings so exceedingly, as to reward her for the wonderful efforts she made.

To Miss Ruxton.

"*Edgeworthstown, May* 31, 1817.

"This day, so anxiously expected, has arrived—the only birthday of my father's for many, many years which has not brought unmixed feelings of pleasure. He had had a terrible night, but when I went into his room and stood at the foot of his bed, his voice was strong and cheerful, as usual. I put into his hand the hundred and sixty printed pages of 'Ormond' which kind-hearted Hunter had successfully managed to get ready for this day. How my dear father can, in the midst of such sufferings, and in such an exhausted state of body, take so much pleasure in such things, is astonishing. Oh, my dear Sophy, what must be the fund of warm affection from which this springs! and what infinite, exquisite pleasure to me! 'Call Sneyd directly,' he said, and swallowed some stirabout, and said he felt renovated. Sneyd was seated at the foot of his bed. 'Now, Maria, dip anywhere, read on.' I began:

'King Corny recovered.' Then he said, 'I must tell Sneyd the story up to this.'

"And most eloquently, most beautifully did he tell the story. No mortal could ever have guessed that he was an invalid, if they had only *heard* him *speak*.

"Just as I had here stopped writing my father came out of his room, looking wretchedly, but ordered the carriage, and said he would go to Longford to see Mr. Fallon about materials for William's bridge. He took with him his three sons, and 'Maria to read Ormond,' —great delight to me. He was much pleased, and this wonderful father of mine drove all the way to Longford: forced our way through the tumult of the most crowded market I ever saw—his voice heard clear all the way down the street—stayed half-an-hour in the carriage on the bridge talking to Mr. Fallon; and we were not home till half-past six. He could not dine with us, but after dinner he sent for us all into the library. He sat in the arm-chair by the fire; my mother in the opposite arm-chair, Pakenham in the chair behind her, Francis on a stool at her feet, Maria beside them; William next, Lucy, Sneyd; on the sofa opposite the fire, as when you were here, Honora, Fanny, Harriet, and Sophy; my aunts next to my father, and Lovell between them and the sofa. He was much pleased at Lovell and Sneyd's coming down for this day."

Mr. Edgeworth died on the 13th of June, and the rest of this year is a blank.

END OF VOL. I.